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A NEW VARIORUM EDITION

OF

SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY
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A MIDSOMMER NIGHTS DREAME

[*THIRD EDITION*]

PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
LONDON: 36 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, COVENT GARDEN

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WESTCOTT & THOMSON,
Electrotypers and Stereotypers, Phila.

PRESS OF J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY,
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IN MEMORIAM

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PREFACE

'I KNOW not,' says Dr JOHNSON, 'why SHAKESPEARE calls this play '"A *Midsummer* Night's Dream," when he so carefully informs us 'that it happened on the night preceding *May* day.'

'The title of this play,' responds Dr FARMER, 'seems no more 'intended to denote the precise *time of the action* than that of *The* '*Winter's Tale*, which we find was at the season of sheep-shearing.'

'In *Twelfth Night*,' remarks STEEVENS, 'Olivia observes of Mal-'volio's seeming frenzy, that "it is a very *Midsummer* madness." 'That time of the year, we may therefore suppose, was anciently 'thought productive of mental vagaries resembling the scheme of 'SHAKESPEARE'S play. To this circumstance it might have owed its 'title.'

'I imagine,' replies the cautious MALONE, 'that the title was 'suggested by the time it was first introduced on the stage, which 'was probably at Midsummer: "A Dream for the *entertainment* of '"a Midsummer night." *Twelfth Night* and *The Winter's Tale* 'had probably their titles from a similar circumstance.'

Here the discussion of the *Title of the Play* among our forbears closed, and ever since there has been a general acquiescence in the reason suggested by MALONE: however emphatic may be the allusions to May-day, the play was designed as one of those which were common at Midsummer festivities. To the inheritors of the English tongue the potent sway of fairies on Midsummer Eve is familiar. The very title is in itself a charm, and frames our minds to accept without question any delusion of the night; and this it is which shields it from criticism.

Not thus, however, is it with our German brothers. Their native air is not spungy to the dazzling spells of SHAKESPEARE'S genius. Against his wand they are magic-proof; they are not to be hugged into his snares; titles of plays must be titles of plays, and indicate what they mean.

Accordingly, from the earliest days of German translation, this discrepancy in the present play between festivities, with the magic

rites permissible only on *Walpurgisnacht*, the first of May, and a dream seven weeks later on *Johannisnacht*, the twenty-fourth of June, was a knot too intrinse to unloose, and to this hour, I think, no German editor has ventured to translate the title more closely than by *A Summernight's Dream*. In the earliest translation, that by WIELAND in 1762, the play was named, without comment as far as I can discover, *Ein St. Johannis Nachts-Traum*. But then we must remember that WIELAND was anxious to propitiate a public wedded to French dramatic laws and unprepared to accept the barbarisms of *Gilles* SHAKESPEARE. Indeed, so alert was poor WIELAND not to offend the purest taste that he scented, in some incomprehensible way, a flagrant impropriety in 'Hence, you long-legged *spinners*, hence;' a dash in his text replaces a translation of the immodest word 'spinner,' which is paraphrased for us, however, in a footnote by the more decent word 'spider,' which we can all read without a blush.

ESCHENBURG, VOSS, SCHLEGEL, TIECK, BODENSTEDT, SCHMIDT (to whom we owe much for his *Lexicon*), all have *Ein Sommer Nachts Traum*. RAPP follows WIELAND, but then RAPP is a free lance; he changes Titles, Names, Acts, and Scenes at will; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* becomes *The Two Friends of Oporto*, with the scene laid in Lisbon, and with every name Portuguese. But SIMROCK, whose *Plots of Shakespeare's Plays*, translated and issued by *The Shakespeare Society* in 1840, is helpful,—SIMROCK boldly changed the title to *Walpurgisnachtstraum*, and stood bravely by it in spite of the criticisms of KURZ in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* (iv, 304). SIMROCK's main difficulty seems to me to be one which he shares in common with many German critics, who apparently assume that SHAKESPEARE'S ways were their ways, and that he wrote with the help of the best *Conversations-Lexicon* within his reach; that at every step SHAKESPEARE looked up historical evidence, ransacked the classics, and burrowed deeply in the lore of Teutonic popular superstitions; accordingly, if we are to believe SIMROCK, it was from the popular superstitions of Germany that SHAKESPEARE, in writing the present play, most largely drew.

TIECK, in a note to SCHLEGEL'S translation in 1830, had said that the *Johannisnacht*, the twenty-fourth of June, was celebrated in England, and indeed almost throughout Europe, by many innocent and superstitious observances, such as seeking for the future husband or sweetheart, &c. This assertion SIMROCK (p. 436, ed. Hildburghausen, 1868) uncompromisingly pronounces false; because the only custom mentioned by GRIMM in his *Mythologie*, p. 555, as taking place on Midsummer Eve is that of wending to neighboring springs,

there to find healing and strength in the waters. On Midsummer Night there were only the Midsummer fires. When, however, TIECK goes on to say that 'many herbs and flowers are thought to 'attain only on this night their full strength or magical power,' he takes SIMROCK wholly with him; here at last, says the latter, in this fact, 'that the magic power of herbs is restricted to certain tides 'and times, lies the source of all the error in the title of this play, 'a title which cannot have come from SHAKESPEARE'S hands.' All the blame is to be laid on the magic herbs with which the eyes of the characters in the play were latched. SHAKESPEARE, continues SIMROCK, must have been perfectly aware that he had represented this drama as played, not at the summer solstice, but on the Walpurgis night,—Theseus makes several allusions to the May-day observances; and inasmuch as this old symbolism was vividly present to the poet, we may assume that he placed the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta on the first of May, because the May King and May Queen were wont to be married within the first twelve days of that month. Even Oberon's and Titania's domestic quarrel over the little changeling 'is founded on the German legends of the gods'; Frea and Gwodan quarrel in the same way over their devotees, and Frigga and Odin, in the *Edda*, over Geirröd and Agnar. 'The commentators,' complains SIMROCK, 'are profuse enough with their explanations where 'no explanations are needed, but not a hint do they give us of the 'reason why Puck is called a "wanderer," whereas it is an epithet 'which originated in the wanderings of Odin.' This *Germanising* of SHAKESPEARE is, I think, pushed to its extreme when SIMROCK finds an indication of Puck's high rank among the fairies in the mad sprite's 'other name, Ruprecht, which is *Ruodperacht*, the Glory-glittering.' It is vain to ask where SHAKESPEARE calls Puck 'Ruprecht;' it is enough for SIMROCK that Robin Goodfellow's counterpart in German Folk lore is Ruprecht, and that he chooses so to translate the name Robin. As a final argument for his adopted title, *Walpurgisnachtstraum*, SIMROCK (p. 437) urges that Oberon, Titania, and Puck could not have had their sports on Midsummer's Eve, because this is the shortest night in the year and it was made as bright as day by bonfires. In reply to KURZ'S assertion that WIELAND'S *Oberon* suggested GOETHE'S *Intermezzo* (that incomprehensible and ineradicable defect in GOETHE'S immortal poem), SIMROCK replies (*Quellen des Shakespeare*, 2d ed. ii, 343, 1870) that GOETHE took no hint whatever from WIELAND'S *Oberon*, but named his *Intermezzo—A Walpurgisnachts Traum* 'in 'deference to SHAKESPEARE, just as SHAKESPEARE himself would have 'named his own play, knowing that the mad revelry of spirits, for

'which the night of the first of May is notorious, then goes rushing 'by like a dream.'

This brief account of a discussion in Germany is not out of place here. From it we learn somewhat of the methods of dealing with SHAKESPEARE in that land which claims an earlier and more intimate appreciation of him than is to be found in his own country—a claim which, I am sorry to say, has been acknowledged by some of SHAKESPEARE'S countrymen who should have known better.

The discrepancy noted by Dr JOHNSON can be, I think, explained by recalling the distinction, always in the main preserved in England, between festivities and rites attending the May-day celebrations and those of the twenty-fourth of June: the former were allotted to the day-time and the latter to the night-time.* As the wedding sports of Theseus, with hounds and horns and Interludes, were to take place by daylight, May day was the fit time for them; as the cross purposes of the lovers were to be made straight with fairy charms during slumber, night was chosen for them, and both day and night were woven together, and one potent glamour floated over all in the shadowy realm of a midsummer night's dream.

The text of the First Folio, the *Editio Princeps*, has been again adopted in the present play, as in the last four volumes of this edition. It has been reproduced, from my own copy, with all the exactitude in my power. The reasons for adopting this text are duly set forth in the Preface to *Othello*, and need not be repeated. Time has but confirmed the conviction that it is the text which a student needs constantly before him. In a majority of the plays it is the freshest from SHAKESPEARE'S own hands.

As in the case of fifteen or sixteen other plays of SHAKESPEARE, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was issued in Quarto, during SHAKESPEARE'S lifetime. In this Quarto form there were two issues, both of them dated 1600. To only one of them was a license to print granted by the Master Wardens of the Stationers' Company—the nearest approach in those days to the modern copyright. The license is thus reprinted by ARBER in his *Transcript of the Stationers' Registers*, vol. iii, p. 174:†

* How many, how various, how wild, and occasionally how identical these festivities were, the curious reader may learn in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, i, 212–247, 298–337, Bohn's ed., or in Chambers's *Book of Days*.

† In Malone's reprint of this entry, the title reads a 'Mydsomer Nyghte Dreame.' It may be worth while to mention what, I believe, has been nowhere noticed, the variation in the title as it stands in the Third and Fourth Folios: 'A Midsummers nights Dreame.'

8. octobris [1600]

Thomas ffyssher Entred for his copie vnder the handes of master RODES | and the Wardens A booke called *A mydsommer nightes Dreame* . . . . . vj[d]

The book thus licensed and entered appeared eventually with the following title page:—'A | Midſommer nights | dreame. | As it 'hath beene ſundry times pub- | *lickely acted, by the Right honoura-* | 'ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his | *ſeruants.* | *Written by William* '*Shakespeare.* | [Publishers punning device of a king-fisher, with a 'reference, in the motto, to the old belief in halcyon weather: '*motos ſoleo componere fluctus*] ¶ Imprinted at London, for *Thomas* '*Fisher*, and are to | be ſoulde at his ſhoppe, at the Signe of the 'White Hart, | in *Fleeteſtreete.* 1600.'

The Quarto thus authorised is called the First Quarto (Q_1), and sometimes Fisher's Quarto.

No entry of a license to print the other Quarto has been found in the *Stationers' Registers*. Its title is as follows:—'A | Midſom- 'mer nights | dreame. | As it hath beene ſundry times pub- | *likely* '*acted, by the Right Honoura-* | ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his | '*ſeruants.* | *VVritten by VVilliam Shakeſpeare.* | [Heraldic device, with 'the motto *Post Tenebras Lvx.*] *Printed by Iames Roberts*, 1600.'

This is termed the Second Quarto (Q_2) or Roberts's Quarto. The second place is properly allotted to it, because, apart from the plea that an unregistered edition ought not, in the absence of proof, to take precedence of one that is registered, it is little likely, so it seems to me, that Fisher would have applied for a license to print when another edition was already on the market; and he might have saved his registration fee. There are, however, two eminent critics who are inclined to give the priority to this unregistered Quarto of Roberts. 'Perhaps,' says HALLIWELL,* 'Fisher's edition, which, on the whole, seems to be more cor- 'rect than the other, was printed from a corrected copy of that published 'by Roberts. It has, indeed, been usually supposed that Fisher's edition 'was the earliest, but no evidence has been adduced in support of this 'assertion, and the probabilities are against this view being the correct 'one. Fisher's edition could not have been published till nearly the 'end of the year; and, in the absence of direct information to the 'contrary, it may be presumed that the one printed by Roberts is 'really the first edition.' If the 'probabilities,' thus referred to, are the superiority of Fisher's text and the lateness in the year at which it was registered, both may be, I think, lessened by urging, first, that

* *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 34, 1879.

the excellence of the text is counterbalanced by the inferiority of the typography, a defect little likely to occur in a second edition; and, secondly, in regard to the 'end of the year,' HALLIWELL, I cannot but think, overlooked the fact that the year began on the 25th of March; the 8th of October was therefore only a fortnight past the middle of the year.

The other critic who does not accept Fisher's registered copy (Q_1) as earlier than Roberts's unregistered copy (Q_2) is FLEAY, to whom 'it seems far more likely' (*The English Drama*, ii, 179) that 'Roberts 'printed the play for Fisher, who did not, for some reason unknown to 'us, care to put his name on the first issue; but finding the edition 'quickly exhausted, and the play popular, he then appended his 'name as publisher.' Furthermore, FLEAY makes the remarkable assertion that 'printer's errors are far more likely to have been intro-'duced than corrected in a second edition.' From FLEAY'S hands we have received such bountiful favours in his *Chronicle History of the London Stage* and in his *Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama* that it seems ungracious to criticise. Shall we not, like Lokman the Wise, 'accept one bitter fruit'? and yet this bitter fruit is elsewhere of a growth which overruns luxuriantly all dealings with the historical SHAKESPEARE, where surmise is assumed as fact, and structures are reared on imaginary foundations. Does it anywhere stand recorded, let me respectfully ask, that Thomas Fisher 'found that the edition 'was quickly exhausted'?

Thus, then, with these two texts and the Folio we have our critical apparatus for the discovery, amid misprints and sophistications, of SHAKESPEARE'S own words, which is the butt and sea-mark of our utmost sail. To enter into any minute examination of the three texts is needless in an edition like the present. It is merely forestalling the work, the remunerative work, of the student; wherefor all that is needed is fully given in the TEXTUAL NOTES, which therein fulfill the purpose of their existence. Results obtained by the student's own study of these Textual Notes will be more profitable to him than results gathered by another, be they tabulated with ultra-German minuteness. It is where only one single text is before him that a student needs another's help. This help is obtrusive when, as in this edition, there are practically forty texts on the same page. All that is befitting here, at the threshold of the volume, is to set forth certain general conclusions.

In the Folio, the Acts are indicated. In none of the three texts is there any division into Scenes.

In Fisher's Quarto (Q_1), although the entrances of the characters are noted, the exits are often omitted, and the spelling throughout is

archaic, for instance, *shee*, *bedde*, *dogge*, &c., betraying merely a compositor's peculiarity; to this same personal equation (to borrow an astronomical phrase) may be attributed such spellings as *bould*, I, i, 68; *chaunting*, I, i, 82; *graunt*, I, i, 234; *daunce*, II, i, 90; *Perchaunce*, II, i, 144; *ould*, v, i, 273, and others elsewhere. Its typography when compared with that of the Second Quarto is inferior, the fonts are mixed, and the type old and battered. On the other hand, the Second Quarto, Roberts's, has the fairer page, with type fresh and clear, and the spelling is almost that of to-day. The exits, too, are more carefully marked than in what is assumed to be its predecessor. Albeit the width of Roberts's page is larger than Fisher's, the two Quartos keep line for line together; where, now and then, there happens to be an overlapping, the gap is speedily spaced out. In both Quartos the stage directions are, as in copies used on the stage, in the imperative, such as '*wind horns*,' '*sleep*,' &c. Both Quartos have examples of spelling by the ear. In 'Ile watch Titania when ſhe is 'aſleepe' (II, i, 184) Roberts's compositor, following the sound, set up 'Ile watch Titania whence ſhe is aſleepe.' In the same way the compositors of both Quartos set up: 'Dians bud, or Cupids flower,' instead of: 'Dian's bud *o'er* Cupid's flower.' Again, it is the similarity of sound which led the compositors to set up: 'When the Wolf beholds the Moon,' instead of *behowls*. And, indeed, I am inclined to regard all the spelling in Fisher's Quarto, archaic and otherwise, as the result of composing by the ear from dictation, instead of by the eye from manuscript; hence the spelling becomes the compositor's personal equation. Moreover, many of the examples of what is called the 'absorption' of consonants are due, I think, to this cause. Take, for instance, a line from the scene where Bottom awakes. Roberts's Quarto and the Folio read: 'if he go about to expound this dream.' Fisher's compositor heard the sound of 'to' merged in the final *t* of 'about,' and so he set up, 'if he go about expound 'this dream.' The same absorption occurs, I think, in a line in *The Merchant of Venice*, which, as it has never, I believe, been suggested, and has occurred to me since that play was issued in this edition, I may be pardoned for inserting here as an additional instance of the same kind. Shylock's meaning has greatly puzzled editors and critics where he says to the Duke at the beginning of the trial: 'I'll not answer that: But say it is my humour, Is it an-'swered?' Thus read, the reply is little short of self-contradiction. Shylock says that he will not answer, and yet asks the Duke if he is answered. Grant that the conjunction *to* was heard by the compositor in the final *t* of 'But,' and we have the full phrase 'I'll

'not answer that but *to* say it is my humour,' that is, 'I'll answer that 'no further than to say it is my humour. Is it answered?'

In the discussion of misprints in general, and especially of these instances of absorption—and these instances are numberless—not enough allowance has been made, I think, for this liability to compose by sound to which compositors even at the present day are exposed when with a retentive memory they carry long sentences in their minds, and to which compositors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were most especially exposed, when, as we have reason to believe, they did not, as a rule, compose by the eye from a copy before them, but wholly by the ear from dictation.* Furthermore, it is not impossible that many of the examples adduced to prove that the text of sundry Quartos was obtained from hearing the play on the stage may be traced to hearing the play in the printer's office. Be this as it may, it is assuredly more likely that such blunders as 'Eagles' for *Ægle*, or 'Peregenia' for *Perigouna* (of North's *Plutarch*), in II, i, 82, are due to the deficient hearing of a compositor, than that they were so written by a man of as accurate a memory as SHAKESPEARE, whose 'less Greek' was ample to avoid such misnomers.

In the address 'To the great Variety of Readers' prefixed by HEMINGE and CONDELL to the First Folio, we are led by them to infer that the text of that edition was taken directly from SHAKESPEARE'S own manuscript, which they had received from him with 'scarse a blot.' Unfortunately, in the present case, this cannot be strictly true. The proofs are only too manifest that the text of the Folio is that of Roberts's Quarto (Q_2). Let us not, however, be too hasty in imputing to HEMINGE and CONDELL a wilful untruth. It may be that in using a printed text they were virtually using SHAKESPEARE'S manuscript if they knew that this text was printed directly from his manuscript, and had been for years used in their theatre as a stage copy, with possibly additional stage-business marked on the margin for the use of the prompter, and here and there sundry emendations, noted possibly by the author's own hand, who, by these changes, theoretically authenticated all the rest of the text.

* Conrad Zeltner, a learned printer of the 17th century, said . . . . 'that it was customary to employ a reader to read aloud to the compositors, who set the types from dictation, not seeing the copy. He also says that the reader could dictate from as many different pages or copies to three or four compositors working together. When the compositors were educated, the method of dictation may have been practised with some success; when they were ignorant, it was sure to produce many errors. Zeltner said he preferred the old method, but he admits that it had to be abandoned on account of the increasing ignorance of the compositors.'—*The Invention of Printing*, &c. by T. L. DE VINNE, New York, 1876, p. 524.

The Folio was printed in 1623. We know that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was in existence in 1598. Is it likely that during the quarter of a century between these two dates, many leaves of legible manuscript would survive of a popular play, which had been handled over and over again by indifferent actors or by careless boys? That many and many a play did really survive in manuscript for long years, we know, but then they had not, through lack of popularity, probably been exposed to as much wear and tear of stage use as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, wherein, too, about a third of the actors were boys.

Be this, however, as it may, in those days when an editor's duty, hardly to this hour fully recognised, of following the *ipsissima verba* of his author, was almost unknown, it is an allowable supposition that HEMINGE and CONDELL, unskilled editors in all regards, believed they were telling the substantial truth when they said they were giving us as the copy of SHAKESPEARE'S own handwriting, that which they knew was printed directly from it, and which might well have been used many a time and oft on the stage by SHAKESPEARE himself.

Let us not be too hasty in condemning SHAKESPEARE'S two friends who gathered together his plays for us. To be sure, it was on their part a business venture, but this does not lessen our gratitude. Had HEMINGE and CONDELL foreseen, what even no poet of that day, however compact of all imagination, could foresee, 'the fierce light' which centuries after was destined 'to beat' on every syllable of every line, it is possible that not even the allurements of a successful stroke of business could have induced them to assume their heavy responsibility; they might have 'shrunk blinded by the glare,' the world have lacked the Folio, and the current of literature have been, for all time, turned awry.

The reasons which induced SHAKESPEARE'S close friends and fellow-actors to adopt Roberts's Quarto (Q_2) as the Folio text, we shall never know, but adopt it they did, as the Textual Notes in the present edition make clear, with manifold proofs. It is not, however, solely by similarity of punctuation, or even of errors, that the identity of the two texts is to be detected; these might be due to a common origin; but there are ways more subtle whereby we can discover the 'copy' used by the compositors of the Folio. Should a noteworthy example be desired, it may be found in III, i, 168–170, where Titania calls for Pease-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed, and the four little fairies enter with their 'Ready,' 'And I,' 'And I,' 'And I.' In the Folio, Titania's call is converted into a stage-direc-

tion, with *Enter* before it, and the little fairies as they come in respond 'Ready' without having been summoned. Had the Folio been our only text, there would have been over this line much shedding of Christian and, I fear it must be added, unchristian ink. But by referring to the Quartos we find that it is in obedience to Titania's call that the atomies enter, and that *Enter foure Fairyes* is the only stage-direction there. Like all proper names in both Quartos and Folios, the names Peaseblossom and the others are in Italics, as are also all stage-directions. In Fisher's Quarto (Q_1) Titania's summons is correctly printed as the concluding line of her speech, thus: —'*Peaſe-bloſſome, Cobweb, Moth,* and *Muſtard-ſeede?*' In Roberts's Quarto (Q_2) the line is also printed as of Titania's speech, but the compositor carelessly overlooked both the 'and' in Roman, which he changed to Italic, and the interrogation at the end, which he changed to a full stop, thus converting it apparently into a genuine stage-direction, and as such it was incontinently accepted by his copyist the compositor of the Folio, who prefixed *Enter* and changed *Enter foure Fairies* into *and foure Fairies*, thereby making the number of Fairies eight in all; and he may have thought himself quite 'smart,' as the Yankees say, in thus clearing up a difficulty which was made for him by Roberts's compositor, through the printing in Italic of 'and' and through the change of punctuation. Thus it is clear, I think, that in this instance there can be little doubt that Roberts's Quarto was the direct source of the text of the First Folio.

There are, however, certain variations here and there between the Quartos and Folio which indicate in the latter a mild editorial supervision. For instance, in II, i, 95 both Quartos read 'euerie pelting riuer;' the Folio changes 'pelting' to 'petty,' an improvement which bears the trace of a hand rather more masterful than that of a compositor who elsewhere evinces small repugnance at repeating errors. In III, i, 90, after the *exit* of Bottom, Quince says, according to the Quartos, 'A stranger Pyramus than e'er played 'here'—a remark impossible in Quince's mouth. The Folio corrects by giving it to Puck. In III, ii, 227, in the Quartos, Hermia utters an incurably prosaic line, 'I am amazed at your words;' the Folio, with a knowledge beyond that of a mere compositor, prints, 'I 'am amazed at your *passionate* words.'

Again, there is another class of variations which reveal to us that the copy of the Quarto, from which the Folio was printed, had been a stage-copy. In the first scene of all, Theseus bids Philostrate, as the Master of the Revels, 'go stir up the Athenian youth to merriments.' Philostrate retires and immediately after

Egeus enters. In no scene throughout the play, except in the very last, are Philostrate and Egeus on the stage at the same time, so that down to this last scene one actor could perform the two parts, and this practice of 'doubling' must have been frequent enough in a company as small as at The Globe. In the last scene, however, it is the duty of Philostrate to provide the entertainment, and Egeus too has to be present. There can be no 'doubling' now, and one of the two characters must be omitted. Of course it is the unimportant Philostrate who is stricken out; Egeus remains, and becomes the Master of the Revels and provides the entertainment. In texts to be used only by readers any change whatever is needless, but in a text to be used by actors the prefixes to the speeches must be changed, and '*Phil.*' must be erased and '*Egeus*' substituted. And this, I believe, is exactly what was done in the copy of the Quarto from which the Folio was printed,—but in the erasing, one speech (V, i, 84) was accidentally overlooked, and the tell-tale '*Phil.*' remained. This, of itself, is almost sufficient proof that the Folio was printed from a copy which was used on the stage.

Furthermore, cumulative proofs of this stage-usage are afforded both by the number and by the character of the stage-directions. In Fisher's Quarto (Q_1) there are about fifty-six stage-directions; in Roberts's (Q_2), about seventy-four; and in the Folio, about ninety-seven, not counting the division into Acts. Such minute attention to stage-business in the Folio as compared with the Quartos should not be overlooked.

There remain in the Folio two other traces of a stage copy which, trifling though they may be, add largely, I cannot but think, to the general conclusion. In V, i, 134, before Pyramus and the others appear, we have the stage-direction '*Tawyer with a Trumpet before them.*' In 'Tawyer' we have the name of one of the company, be it Trumpeter or Presenter, just as in *Romeo and Juliet* we find '*Enter Will Kempe.*' The second trace of the prompter's hand is to be found, I think, in III, i, 116, where Pyramus, according to the stage-direction of the Folio, enters '*with the Asse head.*' In all modern editions this is of course changed to '*an* Ass's head,' but the prompter of SHAKESPEARE'S stage, knowing well enough that there was among the scanty properties but one Ass-head, inserted in the text 'with *the* Asse head'—the only one they had.

In any review of the text of the Folio one downright oversight should be noted. It is the omission of a whole line, which is given in both Quartos. The omission occurs after III, ii, 364, where the omitted line as given by the Quartos is:—

'*Her.* I am amaz'd, and know not what to ſay. *Exeunt.*'

Had the Folio omitted Hermia's speech while retaining the *Exeunt*, we might infer that the omission was intentional; but, as there is no *Exeunt* in the Folio where it is needed, the conclusion is inevitable that the omission of the whole line is merely a compositor's oversight, and not due to an erasure by the prompter or the author, who had the line before him in his Quarto.

To sum up the three texts:—Fisher's registered Quarto, or The First Quarto, has the better text, and inferior typography. Roberts's unregistered Quarto, or The Second Quarto, corrects some of the errors in Fisher's, is superior to it in stage-directions; in spelling; and, occasionally, in the division of lines; but is inferior in punctuation. The First Folio was printed from a copy of Roberts's Quarto, which had been used as a prompter's stage copy. Thus theoretically there are three texts; virtually there is but one. The variations between the three will warrant scarcely more than the inference that possibly in the Folio we can now and then detect the revising hand of the author. In any microscopic examination of the Quartos and Folios, with their commas and their colons, we must be constantly on our guard lest we fall into the error of imagining that we are dealing with the hand of SHAKESPEARE; in reality it is simply that of a mere compositor.

The stories of the texts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and of *The Merchant of Venice* are much alike. In both there are two Quartos, and in both a Quarto was the 'copy' for the Folio, and in both the inferior Quarto was selected; both plays were entered on the *Stationers' Registers* in the month of October, of the same year; both were the early ventures of young stationers (*The Merchant of Venice* was Thomas Heyes's second venture, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Thomas Fisher's first), and in both of them James Roberts figures as the almost simultaneous printer of the same play. And it is this James Roberts who is, I believe, the centre of all the entanglement over these Quartos of *The Merchant of Venice* and of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, just as I have supposed him to be in the case of *As You Like It* (see *As You Like It*, p. 296, and *Merchant of Venice*, p. 271 of this edition). I will here add no darker shadows to the portrait of James Roberts, which, in the *Appendix* to *As You Like It*, was painted 'from the depths of my consciousness.' I will merely emphasize the outlines by supposing that young Thomas Heyes and young Thomas Fisher were the victims of the older, shrewder James Roberts, who in some unknowable way was close enough to

the Lord Chamberlain's Servants to obtain, honestly or, I fear me, dishonestly, manuscript copies of SHAKESPEARE's plays, and, unable, through ill-repute with the Wardens, to obtain a license to print, he sold these copies to two inexperienced young stationers; and then, after his victims' books were published, in one case actually printing the Quarto for one of them, he turned round and issued a finer and more attractive edition for his own benefit. Then, after the two rival editions were issued, the same friendship or bribery, which obtained for him a copy taken from the manuscript of SHAKESPEARE, led the actors to use James Roberts's clearly printed page in place of the worn and less legible stage manuscript. Hence it may be that HEMINGE and CONDELL, knowing the craft whereby the text of Roberts's Quarto was obtained, could with truth refer to it as 'stolne and surreptitious,' and yet at the same time adopt a copy of it which had been long in use on the stage, worn and corrected perchance by the very hand of the Master, as the authentic text for the Folio; and in announcing that they had used SHAKESPEARE's own manuscript, their assertion was a grace not greatly 'snatched beyond the bounds of truth.'

Thus, by the aid of that pure imagination which is a constant factor in the solution of problems connected with SHAKESPEARE as a breather of this world, we may solve the enigma of the Quartos and Folio of this play and of the others where James Roberts figures.

It is perhaps worth while to note the ingenuity, thoroughly German, with which Dr ALEXANDER SCHMIDT converts the heraldic device on the title-page of James Roberts's Quarto into an example of punning arms. 'The crowned eagle,' says the learned lexicographer (*Program*, &c. p. 14), 'on the left of the two compartments into 'which the shield is divided, probably indicates King *James*, Eliza-'beth's successor, and gives us the printer's surname. The key, with 'intricate wards, on the right, is the tool and arms of a "*Roberts*man," 'as a burglar was then termed.' If my having in Heraldry is a younger brother's revenue, Dr SCHMIDT's having in that intricate department of *gentilesse* is apparently that of a brother not appreciably older, most probably a twin. According to my ignorance, the shield is an achievement, where the husband's and the wife's arms are impaled. If this be so, leaving out of view the extreme improbability of any reference in the 'crowned eagle to Elizabeth's suc-'cessor' three years before Elizabeth's death, the key in the sinister half of the shield is Mrs Roberts's arms; and though my estimate of her husband's honesty is small, I am not prepared to brand the wife as a burglar. James Roberts printed several other Quartos,

and whether or not he was unwilling to give further publicity to his wife's burglarious propensity, and thereby disclose the family skeleton, it is impossible to say; but certain it is that he did not afterward adopt these *armes parlantes*, as they were termed, but used innocent and misleading flourishes calculated to baffle detectives.

No commentary on a play of Shakespeare's is now-a-days complete without a discussion of the DATE OF ITS COMPOSITION. Could we be content with dry, prosaic facts, this discussion in the present play would be brief. MERES mentions *A Midsummer Night's Dream* among others, in 1598. This is all we know. But in a discussion over any subject connected with SHAKESPEARE, who ever heard of resting content with what we know? It is what we do not know that fills our volumes. MERES'S *Wits Commonwealth* was entered in the *Stationers' Registers* in September, 1598, when the year, which began in March, was about half through. MERES must have composed his book before it was registered. This uncertainty as to how long before registration MERES wrote, added to the uncertainty as to how long before the writing by MERES the play of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* had been acted, leaves the door ajar for speculation; critics have not been slow to see therein their opportunity, and, flinging the door wide open, have given to surmises and discursive learning a flight as unrestricted as when 'wild geese madly 'sweep the sky.' Of course it can be only through internal evidence in the play itself that proof is to be found for the *Date of Composition* before 1598. This evidence has been detected at various times by various critics in the following lines and items:—

'*Thorough bush, thorough briar.*'—II, i, 5;

Titania's description of the disastrous effects on the weather and harvests caused by the quarrel between her and Oberon.—II, i, 94–120;

'*And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.*'—II, i, 14;

'*One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold.*'—V, i, 11;

A poem of Pyramus and Thisbe;

The date of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*;

The ancient privilege of Athens, whereby Egeus claims the disposal of his daughter, either to give her in marriage or to put her to death.—I, i, 49;

'*The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death of learning, late deceast in beggerie.*'—V, i, 59;

And finally, the whole play being intended for the celebration of some noble marriage, it is only necessary to find out for whose marriage it was written, and we have found out the *Date of Composition.*

If this array of evidence pointed to one and the same date, it would be fairly conclusive of that date. But the dates are as manifold as their advocates; and there is not one of them which has not been, by some critic or other, stoutly denied, and all of them collectively by DYCE. Of some of them it may be said that they are apparently founded on two premises: First, that although SHAKESPEARE'S vocation was the writing of plays, yet his resources were so restricted that his chief avocation lay in conveying lines and ideas from his more original and vigorous contemporaries. And secondly, that although SHAKESPEARE could show us a bank whereon the wild thyme grows and fill our ears with Philomel's sweet melody, yet he could not so depict a season of wet weather that his audience would recognise the picture unless they were still chattering with untimely frosts. (It has always been a source of wonder to me that the thunderstorm in *Lear* is not used to fix the date.)

The last item in this list, namely that which assumes the play to have been written for performance at some noble wedding, is one of the chiefest in determining the year of composition. From our knowledge of the stage in those days this assumption may well be granted. But we must be guarded lest we assume too much. To suppose that Shakespeare could not have written his play for an imaginary noble marriage is to put a limitation to his power, on which I for one will never venture. And, furthermore, knowing that SHAKESPEARE wrote to fill the theatre and earn money for himself and his fellows, to suppose that he could not, without a basis of fact, write a play with wooing and wedding for its theme, which should charm and fascinate till wooing and wedding cease to be, is to impute to him a distrust of his own power in which I again, for one, will bear no share. How little he wrote for the passing hour, how fixedly he was grounded on the 'eternal verities,' how small a share in his plays trifling, local, and temporary allusions bear, is shown by the popularity of these plays, now at this day when every echo of those allusions has died away. If the plays were as saturated with such allusions as the critics would fain have us believe, if all his chief characters had prototypes in real life, then, with the oblivion of these allusions and of these prototypes, there would also vanish, for us, the point and meaning of his words, and SHAKESPEARE'S plays would long ago have ceased to be the source of 'tears and laughter for all time.' No noble marriage

was needed as an occasion to bring out within SHAKESPEARE'S century that witless opera *The Fairy Queen*, and yet almost all the allusions to a marriage to be found in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are there repeated. I have given a short account of this opera in the *Appendix*, page 340, partly to illustrate this very point. Moreover, this same denial of SHAKESPEARE'S dramatic power is everywhere thrust forward. It is pushed even into his *Sonnets*, and for every sigh there and for every smile we must needs, forsooth, fit an occasion. SHAKESPEARE cannot be permitted to bewail his outcast state, but we must straight sniff a peccadillo. We deny to SHAKESPEARE what we grant to every other poet. Had he written *The Miller's Daughter* of TENNYSON, the very site of the mill-dam would have been long ago fixed, the stumps of the 'three chestnuts' discovered, and probably fragments of the 'long green box' wherein grew the mignonette. Probably no department of literature is more beset than the Shakespearian with what WHATELY happily terms the 'Thaumatrope fallacy.' It is in constant use in demonstrating allusions in the plays, and pre-eminently in narrating the facts of his most meagre biography. On one side of a card is set forth theories and pure imaginings interspersed with 'of 'course,' 'it could not be otherwise,' 'natural sequence,' &c., &c., and on the other side SHAKESPEARE; and, while the card is rapidly twirled, before we know it we see SHAKESPEARE firmly imbedded in the assumption and are triumphantly called on to accept a proven fact.

In the *Appendix* will be found a discussion of the items of internal evidence which bear upon THE DATE OF COMPOSITION. In this whole subject of fixing the dates of these plays I confess I take no atom of interest, beyond that which lies in any curious speculation. But many of my superiors assert that this subject, to me so jejune, is of keen interest, and the source of what they think is, in their own case, refined pleasure. To this decision, while reserving the right of private judgement, I yield, at the same time wishing that these, my betters, would occasionally go for a while 'into retreat,' and calmly and soberly, in seclusion, ask themselves what is the chief end of man in reading SHAKESPEARE. I think they would discern that not by the discovery of the dates of these plays is it that fear and compassion, or the sense of humor, are awakened: the clearer vision would enable them, I trust, to separate the chaff from the wheat; and that when, before them, there pass scenes of breathing life, with the hot blood stirring, they would not seek after the date of the play nor ask SHAKESPEARE how old he was when he wrote it. 'The poet,' says LESSING, 'introduces us to the feasts of the gods, and

'great must be our *ennui* there, if we turn round and inquire after the 'usher who admitted us.' When, however, between every glance we try to comprehend each syllable that is uttered, or strain our ears to catch every measure of the heavenly harmony, or trace the subtle workings of consummate art,—that is a far different matter; therein lies many a lesson for our feeble powers; then we share with SHAKESPEARE the joy of his meaning. But the dates of the plays are purely biographical, and have for me as much relevancy to the plays themselves as has a chemical analysis of the paper of the Folio or of the ink of the Quartos.

Due explanations of THE TEXTUAL NOTES will be found in the *Appendix*, page 344. It has been mentioned in a previous volume of this edition—and it is befitting that the statement should be occasionally recalled—that in these Textual Notes no record is made of the conjectural emendations or rhythmical changes proposed by ZACHARY JACKSON, or by his copesmates BECKETT, SEYMOUR, and Lord CHEDWORTH. The equable atmosphere of an edition like the present must not be rendered baleful by exsufflicate and blown surmises. It is well to remember that this play is a 'Dream,' but, of all loves, do not let us have it a nightmare. It is painful to announce that in succeeding volumes of this edition to these four criticasters must be added certain others, more recent, whose emendations, so called, must be left unrecorded here.

There is abroad a strange oblivion, to call it by no harsher name, among the readers of SHAKESPEARE, of the exquisite nicety demanded, at the present day, in emending SHAKESPEARE'S text—a nicety of judgement, a nicety of knowledge of Elizabethan literature, a nicety of ear, which alone bars all foreigners from the task, and, beyond all, a thorough mastery of SHAKESPEARE'S style and ways of thinking, which alone should bar all the rest of us. Moreover, never for a minute should we lose sight of that star to every wandering textual bark which has been from time immemorial the scholar's surest guide in criticism: *Durior lectio preferenda est.* The successive winnowings are all forgot, to which the text has been subjected for nigh two hundred years. Never again can there be such harvests as were richly garnered by ROWE, THEOBALD, and CAPELL, and when to these we add STEEVENS and MALONE of more recent times, we may rest assured that the gleaning for us is of the very scantiest, and reserved only for the keenest and most skilful eyesight. At the present day those who know the most venture the least. We may see an example of this in *The Globe* edition, where many a line, marked with an

obelus as incorrigible, is airily emended by those who can scarcely detect the difficulty which to the experienced editors of that edition was insurmountable. Moreover, by this time the text of SHAKESPEARE has become so fixed and settled that I think it safe to predict that, unless a veritable MS of SHAKESPEARE's own be discovered, not a single future emendation will be generally accepted in critical editions. Indeed, I think, even a wider range may be assumed, so as to include in this list all emendations, that is, substitutions of words, which have been proposed since the days of COLLIER. Much ink, printer's and other, will be spared if we deal with the text now given to us in *The Globe* and in the recent (second) *Cambridge Edition*, much in the style of NOLAN's words to Lord LUCAN: 'There is the enemy, and there are your 'orders.' There is the text, and we must comprehend it, if we can. But if, after all, in some unfortunate patient the *insanabile cacoethes emendi* still lurk in the system, let him sedulously conceal its products from all but his nearest friends, who are bound to bear a friend's infirmities. Should, however, concealment prove impossible, and naught but publication avail, no feelings must be hurt if we sigh under our breath, 'Why will you be talking, Master Benedict? 'Nobody minds ye.'

The present play is one of the very few whereof no trace of the whole Plot has been found in any preceding play or story; but that there was such a play—and it is more likely to have been a play than a story which SHAKESPEARE touched with his heavenly alchemy—is, I think, more probable than improbable. I have long thought that hints (hints, be it observed) might be found in that lost play of *Huon of Burdeaux* which HENSLOWE records (*Shakespeare Society*, p. 31) as having been performed in 'desembr' and 'Jenewary, 1593,' and called by that thrifty but illiterate manager '*hewen of burdokes*.' Be this as it may, all that is now reserved for us in dealing with the SOURCE OF THE PLOT is to detect the origin of every line or thought which SHAKESPEARE is supposed to have obtained from other writers.

The various hints which SHAKESPEARE took here, there, and everywhere in writing this play will be found set forth at full length in the *Appendix*, p. 268. Among them I have reprinted several which could not possibly have been used by SHAKESPEARE, because of the discrepancy in dates; but as they are found in modern editions, and have arguments based on them, I have preferred to err on the side of fulness. I have not reprinted DRAYTON's *Nymphidia*, which is in this list of publications subsequent in date to *A Midsummer Night's Dream;*

first, because of its extreme length; and secondly, because it is accessible in the popular, and deservedly popular, edition of the present play set forth by the late Professor MORLEY, at an insignificant cost. The temptation to reprint it, nevertheless, was strong after reading an assertion like the following: 'Shakespeare unquestionably borrowed 'from DRAYTON'S *Nymphidia* to set forth his "Queen Mab," and enrich 'his fairy world of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.' * The oversight here in regard to the date of the *Nymphidia* is venial enough. It is not the oversight that astonishes: it is that any one can be found to assert that SHAKESPEARE 'borrowed' from the *Nymphidia*, and that the loan 'enriched' his fairy world. HALLIWELL (*Fairy Mythology*, p. 195) speaks of the *Nymphidia* as 'this beautiful poem.' To me it is dull, commonplace, and coarse. There is in it a constant straining after a light and airy touch, and the poet, as though conscious of his failure, tries to conceal it under a show of feeble jocosity, reminding one of the sickly smile which men put on after an undignified tumble. Do we not see this forced fun in the very name of the hero, 'Pigwiggen'? When Oberon is hastening in search of Titania, who has fled to 'her 'dear Pigwiggen,' one of the side-splitting misadventures of the Elfin King is thus described:—

'A new adventure him betides:
He met an ant, which he bestrides,
And post thereon away he rides,
Which with his haste doth stumble,
And came full over on her snout;
Her heels so threw the dirt about,
For she by no means could get out,
But over him doth tumble.'

Moreover, is it not strange that the borrower, SHAKESPEARE, gave to his fairies such names as *Moth*, *Cobweb*, *Peaseblossom*, when he might have 'enriched' his nomenclature from such a list as this?—

'Hop, and Mop, and Dryp so clear,
Pip, and Trip, and Skip that were
To Mab, their sovereign ever dear,
Her special maids of honour;
Fib, and Tib, and Pinck, and Pin,
Tick, and Quick, and Jil, and Jin,
Tit, and Nit, and Wap, and Win,
The train that wait upon her.'

HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS † mentions a manuscript which he had seen

* GERALD MASSEY: *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, p. 573, ed. 1866; *ib.*, ed. 1872.
† *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 13, 1879.

of CHARLES LAMB, wherein LAMB 'speaks of SHAKESPEARE as having '"invented the fairies."' No one was ever more competent than LAMB to pronounce such an opinion, and nothing that LAMB ever said is more true. There were no real fairies before SHAKESPEARE'S. What were called 'fairies' have existed ever since stories were told to wide-eyed listeners round a winter's fire. But these are not the fairies of SHAKESPEARE, nor the fairies of today. They are the fairies of Grimm's *Mythology*. Our fairies are spirits of another sort, but unless they wear SHAKESPEARE'S livery they are counterfeit. The fairies of Folk Lore were rough and repulsive, taking their style from the hempen homespuns who invented them; they were gnomes, cobbolds, lubberlouts, and, descendants though they may have been of the Greek Nereids, they had lost every vestige of charm along their Northern route.

Dr JOHNSON'S final note on the present play is that 'fairies in '[Shakespeare's] time were much in fashion, common tradition had 'made them familiar, and Spenser's poem had made them great.' If the innuendo here be that SPENSER'S fairies and SHAKESPEARE'S fairies were allied, the uncomfortable inference is inevitable that Dr JOHNSON'S reading of his *Faerie Queene* did not extend to the Tenth Canto of the Second Book, where 'faeryes' are described and the descent given of the Faerie Queene, Gloriana. Along the line of ancestors we meet, it is true, with Oberon; but, like all his progenitors and descendants, he was a mortal, and with no attributes in common with SHAKESPEARE'S Oberon except in being a king. To save the student the trouble of going to SPENSER, the passages referred to are reprinted in the Appendix, p. 287. Merely a cursory glance at these extracts will show, I think, that as far as proving any real connection between the two Oberons is concerned, they might as well have been 'the unedifying Tenth of Nehemiah.'

Reference has just been made to HENSLOWE'S *hewen of burdokes*, with the suggestion that it may have supplied SHAKESPEARE with some hints when writing the present comedy. One of the hints which I had in mind is the name Oberon, and his dwelling in the East. No play founded on the old romance of *Huon of Burdeaux* could have overlooked the great *Deus ex machinâ* of that story, who is almost as important a character as Huon himself, so that HENSLOWE'S 'hewen' must have had an Oberon, and as 'hewen' was acted in 1593, we get very close to the time when MERES wrote his *Wits Commonwealth* and extolled SHAKESPEARE'S *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in 1598. It may be interesting to note that although the character, Oberon, appears for

the first time in this old French romance of *Huon*, KEIGHTLEY has shown that the model is the dwarf Elberich in Wolfram von Eschenbach's ballad of 'Otnit' in the *Heldenbuch*. Furthermore, the names Elberich and Oberon are the same. 'From the usual change of *l* into '*u* (as *al—au*, *col—cou*, &c.) in the French language, Elberich or Albe-'rich (derived from Alp, Alf) becomes Auberich; and *ich* not being 'a French termination, the usual one of *on* was substituted, and so it 'became Auberon, or Oberon.' *

There is one point, however, which certainly yields a strong presumption that Huon's Oberon was, directly or indirectly, the progenitor of Shakespeare's Oberon. Attention was called to it by Mr. S. L. LEE (to whom we are indebted for the valuable excursus in *The Merchant of Venice* on the 'Jews in England') in his *Introduction* to *Duke Huon of Burdeaux*.† 'The Oberon of the great poet's fairy-'comedy,' says Mr LEE, 'although he is set in a butterfly environment, 'still possesses some features very similar to those of the romantic 'fairy king. . . . The mediæval fairy dwells in the East; his kingdom 'is situated somewhere to the east of Jerusalem, in the far-reaching 'district that was known to mediæval writers under the generic name 'of India. Shakespeare's fairy is similarly a foreigner to the western 'world. He is totally unlike Puck, his lieutenant, "the merry wan-'"derer of the night," who springs from purely English superstition, 'and it is stated in the comedy that he has come to Greece "from the '"farthest steep of India." Titania, further, tells her husband how 'the mother of her page-boy gossiped at her side in their home, "in '"the spiced Indian air by night-fall." And it will be remembered 'that an Indian boy causes the jealousy of Oberon.'

It is, however, quite possible to account for these coincidences on the supposition that there was an Oberon on the English stage, intermediate between Huon's and SHAKESPEARE'S. It is difficult to believe that if SHAKESPEARE went direct to *Duke Huon* no trace of the progenitor should survive in the descendant other than in the Eastern references, striking though they are, just pointed out by Mr LEE. The two Oberons do not resemble each other in person, for, although Huon's Oberon 'hathe an aungelyke vysage,' yet is he 'of heyght but 'of .iii. fote, and crokyd shulderyd' (p. 63). Again, 'the dwarfe of 'the fayre, kynge Oberon, came rydynge by, and had on a gowne so 'ryche that it were meruayll to recount the ryches and fayssyon thereof 'and it was so garnyshyd with precyous stones that the clerenes of them 'shone lyke the sone. Also he had a goodly bow in hys hande so

* *Fairy Mythology*, ii, 6, foot-note, 1833.

† *Early English Text Society*, Part i, p. l.

'ryche that it coude not be esteemyde, and hys arrous after the same 'sort and they had suche proparte that any beest in the worlde that he 'wolde wyshe for, the arow sholde areste hym. Also he hade about 'hys necke a ryche horne hangyng by two lases of golde, the horne 'was so ryche and fayre, that there was neuer sene none suche' (p. 65).

It may be also worth while to remark that the parentage of Huon's Oberon was, to say the least, noteworthy. His father was Julius Cæsar, and his mother by a previous marriage became the grandmother of Alexander the Great (p. 72). It was this strain of mortality derived from his father that made Oberon, although king of ye fayrey, mortal. 'I am a mortall man as ye be,' he said once to Charlemagne (p. 265), and shortly after he added to his dear friend, the hero of the romance, 'Huon,' quod Oberon, 'know for a truth I shal not abyde longe in 'this worlde, for so is the pleasure of god. it behoueth me to go in to 'paradyce, wher as my place is apparelled; in ye fayrye I shal byde 'no longer' (p. 267).

Unquestionably, this Oberon of *Huon of Burdeaux* is a noble character, brave, wise, of an infinite scorn of anything untrue or unchaste, and of an aungelyke visage withal, but except in name and dwelling he is not SHAKESPEARE'S Oberon.

When we turn to Puck the case is altered. We know very well all his forbears. About him and his specific name Robin Goodfellow has been gathered by antiquarian and archæological zeal a greater mass of comment than about any other character in the play. The larger share of it is Folk Lore, but beyond the proofs of the antiquity of the name and of his traditional mischievous character little needs either revival or perpetuation in the present edition. The sources of the knowledge of popular superstitions were as free to SHAKESPEARE as to the authors whose gossip is cited by the antiquarians,—all had to go to the stories at a winter's fire authorised by a grandam.

Sundry ballads are reprinted in the *Appendix*, for which the claim is urged that they have influenced, or at least preceded, SHAKESPEARE. There also will be found the extracts from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* which have been cited by many editors as the story to which the present play owes much. It is difficult to understand the grounds for this belief. There is no resemblance between the tale and the drama beyond an allusion to the celebration of May day, and the names Theseus and Philostrate. For the name Hippolyta, SHAKESPEARE must have deserted *Chaucer*, who gives it 'Ipolita,' and

resorted to his *Plutarch*. STAUNTON truly remarks that 'the persist-'ence [of the commentators] in assigning the groundwork of the 'fable to Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* is a remarkable instance of the 'docility with which succeeding writers will adopt, one after another, 'an assertion that has really little or no foundation in fact.'

No little space in the *Appendix* is allotted to the extracts from Greene's *Scottish History of James IV*. This was deemed necessary, because of the great weight of any assertion made by Mr W. A. WARD, who thinks that to this drama Shakespeare was 'in all probability' indebted for the entire machinery of Oberon and his fairy-court. With every desire to accept Mr WARD's view, I am obliged to acknowledge that I can detect no trace of the influence of Greene's drama on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

In the *Appendix* will be found the views of various critics concerning the DURATION OF THE ACTION. This Duration is apparently set forth by SHAKESPEARE himself with emphatic clearness in the opening lines of the play. Theseus there says that 'four happy days bring in 'another moon,' and Hippolyta replies that 'four nights will quickly 'dream away the time.' When, however, it is sought to compute this number of days and nights in the course of the action, difficulties have sprung up of a character so insurmountable that a majority of the critics have not hesitated to say that SHAKESPEARE failed to fulfill this opening promise, and that he actually miscalculated, in such humble figures, moreover, as three and four, and mistook the one for the other. Nay, to such straits is one critic, FLEAY, driven in his loyalty to SHAKESPEARE that, rather than acknowledge an error, he very properly prefers to suppose that some of the characters sleep for twenty-four consecutive hours—an enviable slumber, it must be confessed, when induced by SHAKESPEARE'S hand and furnished by that hand with dreams.

That SHAKESPEARE knew 'small Latin and less Greek' is sad enough. It is indeed depressing if to these deficiencies we must add Arithmetic. Is there no evasion of this shocking charge? Is there not a more excellent way of solving the problem?

The great event of the play, the end and aim of all its action, is the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta. Why did SHAKESPEARE begin the play four days before that event? If the incidents were to occur in a dream, one night is surely enough for the longest of dreams; the play might have opened on the last day of April, and as far as the demands of a dream were concerned the *dramatis personæ* have all waked up, after one night's slumber, bright and fresh on May-day morning

Why then, was the wedding deferred four days? It is not for us to 'ha'e the presoomption' to say what was in SHAKESPEARE'S mind, or what he thought, or what he intended. We can, in a case like this, but humbly suggest that as a most momentous issue was presented to Hermia, either of being put to death, or else to wed Demetrius, or to abjure for ever the society of men, SHAKESPEARE may have thought that in such most grave questions the tender Athenian maid was entitled to at least as much grace as is accorded to common criminals; to give her less would have savoured of needless harshness and tyranny on the part of Theseus, and would have been unbecoming to his joyous marriage mood. Therefore to Hermia is given three full days to pause, and on the fourth, the sealing day 'twixt Theseus and Hippolyta, her choice must be announced. Three days are surely enough wherein a young girl can make up her mind; our sense of justice is satisfied; a dramatic reason intimated for opening the play so long before the main action; and the 'four happy days' of Theseus are justified.

The problem before us, then, is to discover any semblance of probability in the structure of a drama where to four days there is only one night. Of one thing we are sure: it is a midsummer night, and therefore full of enchantment. Ah, if enchantment once ensnares us, and SHAKESPEARE'S enchantment at that, day and night will be alike a dream after we are broad awake. To the victims of fairies, time is nought, divisions of day and night pass unperceived. It is not those inside the magic circle, but those outside—the spectators or the audience—for whom the hours must be counted. It is we, after all, not the characters on the stage, about whom SHAKESPEARE weaves his spells. It is our eyes that are latched with magic juice. The lovers on the stage pass but a single night in the enchanted wood, and one dawn awakens them on May day. We, the onlookers, are bound in deeper charms, and must see dawn after dawn arise until the tale is told, and, looking back, be conscious of the lapse of days as well as of a night.

If 'four happy days,' as Theseus says, 'bring in another moon' on the evening of the first of May, the play must open on the twenty-seventh of April, and as, I think, it is never the custom when counting the days before an event to include the day that is passing, the four days are: the twenty-eighth, the twenty-ninth, the thirtieth of April, and the first of May. Hippolyta's four nights are: the night which is approaching—namely, the twenty-seventh, the twenty-eighth, the twenty-ninth, and the thirtieth of April. The evening of the first of May she could not count; on that evening she was married. (We must count thus

on our fingers, because one critic, Mr DANIEL, has said that Hippolyta should have counted *five* nights.)

The play has begun, and SHAKESPEARE'S two clocks are wound up; on the face of one we count the hurrying time, and when the other strikes we hear how slowly time passes. But before we really begin to listen, SHAKESPEARE presents to us 'one fair enchanted cup,' which we must all quaff. It is but four days before the moon like to a silver bow will be new bent in heaven, and yet when Lysander and Hermia elope on the morrow night, we find, instead of the moonless darkness which should enshroud the earth, that 'Phœbe' is actually beholding 'her silver visage in the watery glass,' and 'decking with liquid pearl 'the bladed grass.' It is folly to suppose that this can be our satellite—our sedate Phœbe hides her every ray before a new moon is born. On Oberon, too, is shed the light of this strange moon. He meets Titania 'by moonlight,' and Titania invites him to join her 'moon-'light revels.' Even almanacs play us false. Bottom's calendar assures us that the moon will shine on the 'night of the play.' Our new moon sets almost with the sun. In a world where the moon shines bright in the last nights of her last quarter, of what avail are all our Ephemerides, computed by purblind, star-gazing astronomers? And yet in the agonising struggle to discover the year in which SHAKESPEARE wrote this play this monstrous moon has been overlooked, and dusty Ephemerides have been exhumed and bade to divulge the Date of Composition, which will be unquestionably divulged can we but find a year among the nineties of the sixteenth century when a new moon falls on the first of May. But even here, I am happy to say, Puck rules the hour and again misleads night-wanderers. There is a whole week's difference between the new moons in Germany and in England in May, 1590, and our ears are so dinned with Robin Goodfellow's 'Ho! ho! ho!' over the discrepancy that we cannot determine whether Bottom's almanac was in German or in English. (I privately think that, as befits Athens and the investigators, it was in Greek, with the Kalends red-lettered.) Into such dilemmas are we led in our vain attempts to turn a stage moon into a real one, and to discover the Date of Composition from internal evidence.

In *Othello* many days are compressed into thirty-six hours; in *The Merchant of Venice* three hours are made equivalent to three months. In the present play four days are to have but one night, and I venture to think that, thanks to the limitations of SHAKESPEARE'S stage, this was a task scarcely more difficult than those in the two plays just mentioned.

Grant that the play opens on Monday, Hippolyta's four nights are

then, Monday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday night, and Thursday night. Why does Lysander propose to elope with Hermia '*to-morrow* 'night,' and Hermia agree to meet him '*morrow* deep midnight'? One would think that not only a lover's haste but a wise prudence would counsel flight that very night. Why need we be told with so much emphasis that the Clowns' rehearsal was to be held '*to-morrow* 'night'? Is it not that both by the specified time of the elopement and by the specified time of the rehearsal we are to be made conscious that Monday night is to be eliminated? If so, there will then remain but three nights to be accounted for before the wedding day, and these three nights are to be made to seem as only one. If while this long night is brooding over the lovers we can be made to see two separate dawns, the third dawn will be May day and the task will be done. We must see Wednesday's dawn, Thursday's dawn, and on Friday morning early Theseus's horns must wake the sleepers.

It is not to be expected that these dawns and the days following them will be proclaimed in set terms. That would mar the impression of one continuous night. They will not be obtruded on us. They will be intimated by swift, fleeting allusions which induce the belief almost insensibly that a new dawn has arisen. To be thoroughly receptive of these impressions we must look at the scene through the eyes of SHAKESPEARE'S audience, which beholds, in the full light of an afternoon, a stage with no footlights or side-lights to be darkened to represent night, but where daylight is the rule; night, be it remembered, is to be assumed only when we are told to assume it.

The Second Act opens in the wood where Lysander and Hermia were to meet at 'deep midnight'; they have started on their journey to Lysander's aunt, and have already wandered so long and so far that Demetrius and Helena cannot find them, and they decide to 'tarry 'for the comfort of the day.' This prepares us for a dawn near at hand. They must have wandered many a weary mile and hour since midnight. Oberon sends for the magic flower, and is strict in his commands to Puck after anointing Demetrius's eyes to meet him 'ere 'the first cock crow.' Again an allusion to dawn, which must be close at hand or the command would be superfluous. Puck wanders 'through the forest' in a vain search for the lovers. This must have taken some time, and the dawn is coming closer. Puck finds the lovers at last, chants his charm as he anoints, by mistake, Lysander's eyes, and then hurries off with 'I must now to Oberon.' We feel the necessity for his haste, the dawn is upon him and the cock about to crow. To say that these allusions are purposeless is to believe that SHAKESPEARE wrote haphazard, which he may believe who lists

This dawn, then, whose streaks we see lacing the severing clouds, is that of Wednesday morning. We need but one more dawn, that of Thursday, before we hear the horns of Theseus. Lest, however, this impression of a new day be too emphatic, SHAKESPEARE artfully closes the Act with the undertone of night by showing us Hermia waking up after her desertion by Lysander. Be it never forgotten that while we are looking at the fast clock we must hear the slow clock strike.

The Third Act begins with the crew of rude mechanicals at their rehearsal. If we were to stop to think while the play is going on before us, we should remember that rightfully this rehearsal is on Tuesday night; but we have watched the events of that night which occurred long after midnight; we have seen a new day dawn; and this is a new Act. Our consciousness tells us that it is Wednesday. Moreover, who of us ever imagines that this rehearsal is at night? As though for the very purpose of dispelling such a thought, Snout asks if the moon shines the night of the play, which is only two or three nights off. Would such a question have occurred to him if they had then been acting by moonlight? Remember, on SHAKESPEARE'S open-air stage we must assume daylight unless we are told that it is night. Though we assume daylight here at the rehearsal, we are again gently reminded toward the close of the scene, as though at the end of the day, that the moon looks with a watery eye upon Titania and her horrid love.

The next scene is night, Wednesday night, and all four lovers are still in the fierce vexation of the dream through which we have followed them continuously, and yet we are conscious, we scarcely know how, that outside in the world a day has slipped by. Did we not see Bottom and all of them in broad daylight? Lysander and Demetrius *exeunt* to fight their duel; Hermia and Helena depart, and again a dawn is so near that darkness can be prolonged, and the starry welkin covered, only by Oberon's magic 'fog as black as Acheron,' and over the brows of the rivals death-counterfeiting sleep can creep only by Puck's art. So near is day at hand that this art must be plied with haste, 'for night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast, And 'yonder shines Aurora's harbinger.' Here we have a second dawn, the dawn of Thursday morning. All four lovers are in the deepest slumber—a slumber 'more dead than common sleep,' induced by magic. And the First Folio tells us explicitly before the Fourth Act opens that '*They ſleepe all the Act.*'

Wednesday night has passed, and this Act, the Fourth, through which they sleep, befalls on Thursday, after the dawn announced by Aurora's harbinger has broadened into day. Surely it is only on a

midsummer noon that we can picture Titania on a bed of flowers, coying Bottom's amiable cheeks and kissing his fair large ears. Never could Bottom even, with or without the ass's nowl, have thought of sending Cavalery Cobweb to kill a red-hipt humble-bee on the top of a thistle at night, when not a bee is abroad. It must be high noon. But Bottom takes his nap with Titania's arms wound round him; the after noon wanes; Titania is awakened and disenchanted; she and Oberon take hands and rock the ground whereon the lovers still are lying, and then, as though to settle every doubt, and to stamp, at the close, every impression ineffaceably that we have reached Thursday night, Oberon tells his Queen that they will dance in Duke Theseus's house '*to-morrow* midnight.' But before the Fairy King and Queen trip away, Puck hears the morning lark, the herald of Friday's dawn, and almost mingling with the song we catch the notes of hunting horns. So the scene closes, with the mindful stage-direction that the *Sleepers Lye ſtill.* It was not a mere pretty conceit that led SHAKESPEARE to lull these sleepers with fairy music and to rock the ground; this sleep was thus charmed and made 'more dead than common sleep' to reconcile us to the long night of Thursday, until early on Friday morning the horns of Theseus's foresters could be heard. The horns are heard; the sleepers 'all start up'; it is Friday, the first of May, and the day when Hermia is to give answer of her choice.

The wheel has come full circle. We have watched three days dawn since the lovers stole forth into the wood *last night*, and four days since we first saw Theseus and Hippolyta *yesterday*. The lovers have quarrelled, and slept not through one night, but three nights, and these three nights have been one night. Theseus's four days are all right, we have seen them all; Hippolyta's four nights are all right, we have seen them all.

There are allusions in the Second Act, undeniably, to the near approach of a dawn, and again there are allusions in the Third Act undeniably to the near approach of a dawn; wherefore, since divisions into Acts indicate progress in the action or they are meaningless, I think we are justified in considering these allusions, in different Acts, as referring to two separate dawns; that of Wednesday and that of Thursday, the only ones we need before the May-day horns are heard on Friday.

For those who refuse to be spellbound it is, of course, possible to assert that these different allusions refer to one and the same dawn, and that the duration of the action is a hopeless muddle. If such an attitude toward the play imparts any pleasure, so be it; one of the objects of all works of art is thereby attained, and the general sum of

happiness of mankind is increased. For my part, I prefer to submit myself an unresisting victim to any charms which SHAKESPEARE may mutter; should I catch him at his tricks, I shall lift no finger to break the spell; and that the spell is there, no one can deny who ever saw this play performed or read it with his imagination on the wing.

Thus far we have been made by SHAKESPEARE to condense time; we are equally powerless when he bids us expand it. Have these days after all really passed so swiftly? Oberon has just come from the farthest steep of India on purpose to be present at this wedding of Hippolyta. We infer that he takes Titania by surprise by the suddenness of his appearance, and yet before the first conference of these Fairies is half through we seem to have been watching them ever since the middle summer's spring, and we are shivering at the remembrance of the effect of their quarrel on the seasons. Oberon knows, too, Titania's haunts, the very bank of wild thyme where she sometimes sleeps at night. He cannot have just arrived from India. He must have watched Titania for days to have found out her haunts. Then, too, how long ago it seems since he sat upon a promontory and marked where the bolt of Cupid fell on a little Western flower!—the flower has had time to change its hue, and for maidens to give it a familiar name. It is not urged that these allusions have any connection with Theseus's four days; it is merely suggested that they help to carry our imaginations into the past, and make us forget the present, to which, when our thoughts are again recalled, we are ready to credit any intimation of a swift advance, be it by a chance allusion or by the sharp division of an Act.

These faint scattered hints are all near the beginning of the Play: it is toward the close, after we have seen the time glide swiftly past, that the deepest impressions of prolonged time must be made on us. Accordingly, although every minute of the dramatic lives of Oberon and Titania has been apparently passed in our sight since we first saw them, yet Oberon speaks of Titania's infatuation for Bottom as a passion of so long standing that at last he began to pity her, and that, meeting her *of late* behind the wood where she was seeking sweet favours for the hateful fool, he obtained the little changeling child. Again, when Bottom's fellows meet to condole over his having been transported, and have in vain sent to his house, Bottom appears with the news that their play has been placed on the list of entertainments for the Duke's wedding. We do not stop to wonder when and where this could have been done, but at once accept a conference and a discussion with the Master of the Revels. Finally, it is in the last Act that the weightiest impression is made of time's slow passage and that many a

day has elapsed. When Theseus decides that he will hear the tragical mirth of 'Pyramus and Thisbe,' Egeus attempts to dissuade him, and says that the play made his eyes water *when he saw it rehearsed.* When and where could he have seen it rehearsed? We witnessed the first and only rehearsal, and no one else was present but ourselves and Puck; immediately after the rehearsal Bottom became the god of Titania's idolatry, and fell asleep in her arms; when he awoke and returned to Athens his comrades were still bewailing his fate; he enters and tells them to prepare for an immediate performance before the Duke. Yet Egeus saw a rehearsal of the whole play with all the characters, and laughed till he cried over it.

Enthralled by SHAKESPEARE'S art, and submissive to it, we accept without question every stroke of time's thievish progress, be it fast or slow; and, at the close, acknowledge that the promise of the opening lines has been redeemed. But if, in spite of all our best endeavours, our feeble wits refuse to follow him, SHAKESPEARE smiles gently and benignantly as the curtain falls, and begging us to take no offence at shadows, bids us think it all as no more yielding than a dream.

H. H F.

March, 1895.

A Midsommer Nights Dreame

Dramatis Personæ

Theſeus, *Duke of* Athens.
Egeus, *an* Athenian *Lord.*
Lyſander, *in Love with* Hermia.
Demetrius, *in Love with* Hermia.
Quince, *the Carpenter.*
Snug, *the Joiner.*
Bottom, *the Weaver.*
Flute, *the Bellows-mender.*
Snout, *the Tinker.*
Starveling, *the Tailor.*

Hippolita, *Princeſs of the* Amazons, *betrothed to* Theſeus.
Hermia, *Daughter to* Egeus, *in love with* Lyſander.
Helena, *in love with* Demetrius.

Attendants.

Oberon, *King of the Fairies.*
Titania, *Queen of the Fairies.*

1. First given by Rowe. 5. in Love with *Hermia.*] belov'd of *Helena.* Cap.

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2. **Theseus**] Throughout the play, a trisyllable: Thesĕus.

6. **Quince**] BELL (iii, 182, note), letting the cart, as Lear's Fool says, draw the horse, asserts that Shakespeare adopted this name from the old German comedy *Peter Squenz.*

8. **Bottom**] HALLIWELL: Nicholas was either a favourite Christian name for a weaver, or a generic appellation for a person of that trade. Bottom takes his name from a bottom of thread. '*Anguinum*, a knotte of snakes rolled togethe lyke a bottome of threede.'—Elyot's *Dictionarie*, 1559. ['*Botme* of threde.'—*Promp. Parv.* In a footnote WAY gives '"A bothome of threde, *filarium.*"—*Cath. Angl.* "Bottome of threde, *gliceaux, plotton de fil.*"—*Palsg.* Skinner derives it from the French *boteau, fasciculus.*' In *Two Gent.* III, ii, 53, Shakespeare uses it as a verb meaning to *wind*, to *twist.* For an example of its modern use by Colman, *The Gentleman*, No. 5: 'Give me leave to wind up the bottom of my loose thoughts on conversation,' &c., and references to Bentley, *Works*, iii, 537, and to Charles Dibdin, *The Deserter*, I, i, see FITZEDWARD HALL'S *Modern English*, 1873, p. 217.—ED.]

16, 17. MALONE (ii, 337, 1821): Oberon and Titania had been introduced in a

[Oberon . . . Titania]

dramatic entertainment before Queen Elizabeth in 1591, when she was at Elvetham in Hampshire; as appears from *A Description of the Queene's Entertainment in Progress at Lord Hartford's*, &c. in 1591. Her majesty, after having been pestered a whole afternoon with speeches in verse from the three Graces, Sylvanus, Wood Nymphs, &c., is at length addressed by the Fairy Queen, who presents her majesty with a chaplet, 'Given me by Auberon the fairie king.' [Malone does not mention, but W. ALDIS WRIGHT does (*Preface*, p. xvi), that the name of the Fairy who thus addressed her majesty was not Titania, but 'Aureola, the Queene of Fairyland.' For the derivation of the name Oberon, see KEIGHTLEY'S note in Preface to this volume, p. xxv.—ED.]

17. **Titania**] KEIGHTLEY (*Fairy Myth.* ii, 127): It was the belief of those days that the Fairies were the same as the classic Nymphs, the attendants of Diana: 'That fourth kind of spiritis,' says King James, 'quhilk be the gentilis was called Diana, and her wandering court, and amongs us called the *Phairie*.' The Fairy-queen was therefore the same as Diana, whom Ovid frequently styles Titania.

HUNTER (*New Illust.* i, 285): We shall be less surprised to find Diana in such company when we recollect that there is much in the Fairy Mythology which seems but a perpetuation of the beautiful conceptions of primeval ages, of the fields, woods, mountains, rivers, and the margin of the sea being haunted by nymphs, the dryades and hamadryades, oreades and naiades.

SIMROCK (*Die Quellen des Sh.* 2te Aflge, ii, 344): The *Handbook of German Myth.* (p. 414, § 125) gives us an explanation of the name of Titania, in that it shows how elvish spirits, and Titania is an elfin queen, steal children, and children are called *Titti*, whence the name of *Tittilake*, wherefrom, according to popular belief, children are fetched. . . . The name does not come from classic mythology, which knows no Titania; nor is it of Shakespeare's coinage, who had enough classic culture to know that the Titans were giants, not elves. [It is rare, indeed, to catch a German napping in the classics, but, *aliquando dormitat*, &c. Almost any Latin Dictionary would have given Simrock the reference to Ovid, *Meta.* iii, 173: 'Dumque ibi perluitur solita Titania lympha,' where 'Titania' is Diana, who is about to be seen by Actæon. Golding, with whose translation of Ovid we suppose that Shakespeare was familiar, gives us no help here; in the three other places where Ovid uses the name Titania as an epithet of Latona, of Pyrrha, and of Circe, Golding does not use that name, but a paraphrase.—ED.]

BAYNES (*Fraser's Maga.* Jan. 1880, p. 101, or *Shakespeare Studies*, 1894, p. 210) [Keightley's] statement is that Titania occurs once in the *Metamorphoses* as a designation of Diana. [A remarkable and, I think, unusual oversight on the part of Prof. Baynes. Vide Keightley, *supra*.—ED.] But in reality the name occurs not once only, but several times, not as the designation of a single goddess, but of several female deities, supreme or subordinate, descended from the Titans. . . . Diana, Latona, and Circe are each styled by Ovid 'Titania.' . . . Thus used [the name] embodies rich and complex associations connected with the silver bow, the magic cup, and the triple crown. . . . Diana, Latona, Hecate are all goddesses of night, queens of the shadowy world, ruling over its mystic elements and spectral powers. The common name thus awakens recollections of gleaming huntresses in dim and dewy woods, of dark rites and potent incantations under moonlit skies, of strange aërial voyages, and ghostly apparitions of the under-world. It was, therefore, of all possible names, the one best fitted to designate the queen of the same shadowy empire, with its

Puck, *or* Robin-goodfellow, *a Fairy.* 18

phantom troops and activities, in the Northern mythology. And since Shakespeare, with prescient inspiration, selected it for this purpose, it has naturally come to represent the whole world of fairy beauty, elfin adventure, and goblin sport connected with lunar influences, with enchanted herbs, and muttered spells. The Titania of Shakespeare's fairy mythology may thus be regarded as the successor of Diana and other regents of the night belonging to the Greek Pantheon. [It is not easy to over-estimate the value of what Prof. BAYNES now proceeds to note. Not since MAGINN'S day has so direct an answer been given to FARMER with his proofs that SHAKESPEARE knew the Latin authors only through translations.—ED.] Reverting to the name Titania, however, the important point to be noted is that Shakespeare clearly derived it from his study of Ovid in the original. It must have struck him in reading the text of the *Metamorphoses*, as it is not to be found in the only translation which existed in his day. Golding, instead of transferring the term Titania, always translates it in the case of Diana by the phrase 'Titan's daughter,' and in the case of Circe by the line: 'Of Circe, who by long descent of Titans' stocke, am borne.' Shakespeare could not therefore have been indebted to Golding for the happy selection. On the other hand, in the next translation of the *Metamorphoses* by Sandys, first published ten years after Shakespeare's death, Titania is freely used. . . . But this use of the name is undoubtedly due to Shakespeare's original choice, and to the fact that through its employment in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* it had become a familiar English word. Dekker, indeed, had used it in Shakespeare's lifetime as an established designation for the queen of the fairies. It is clear, therefore, I think, that Shakespeare not only studied the *Metamorphoses* in the original, but that he read the different stories with a quick and open eye for any name, incident, or allusion that might be available for use in his own dramatic labours.

18. **Puck**] R. GRANT WHITE (ed. i): Until after Shakespeare wrote this play, 'puck' was the generic name for a minor order of evil spirits. The name exists in all the Teutonic and Scandinavian dialects; and in New York [and Pennsylvania.—ED.] the Dutch have left it *spook*. The name was not pronounced in Shakespeare's time with the *u* short. Indeed, he seems to have been the first to spell it 'puck,' all other previous or contemporary English writers in whose works it has been discovered spelling it either *powke*, *pooke*, or *pouke*. There seems to be no reason to doubt that Shakespeare and his contemporaneous readers pronounced it *pook*. The fact that it is made a rhyme to 'luck' is not at all at variance with this opinion, because it appears equally certain that the *u* in that word, and in all of similar orthography, had the sound of *oo*. My own observation had convinced me of this long before I met with the following passages in Butler's *English Grammar*, 1633: '. . . for as *i* short hath the sound of *ee* short, so hath *u* short of *oo* short.' p. 8. 'The Saxon *u* wee have in sundry words turned into *oo*, and not onely *u* short into *oo* short (*which sound is all one*),' &c. p. 9.

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, xvi): Puck is an appellative and not strictly a proper name, and we find him speaking of himself, 'As I am an honest Puck,' 'Else the Puck a liar call.' In fact, Puck, or pouke, is an old word for devil, and it is used in this sense in the *Vision of Piers Ploughman*, 11345 (ed. T. Wright): 'Out of the poukes pondfold No maynprise may us fecche.' And in the *Romance of Richard Coer de Lion*, 4326 (printed in Weber's *Metrical Romances*, vol. ii): 'He is no man he is a pouke.' The Icelandic *púki* is the same word, and in Friesland the kobold

Peaſebloſſom,
Cobweb,
Moth,
Muſtardſeed, } *Fairies.*

Other Fairies attending on the King and Queen.

SCENE Athens, *and a Wood not far from it.*

[Theobald added:]

Philostrate, *Master of the Sports to the Duke.*

Pyramus,
Thisbe,
Wall,
Moonshine,
Lyon, } *Characters in the* Interlude *perform'd by the* Clowns.

or domestic spirit is called Puk. In Devonshire, pixy is the name for a fairy, and in Worcestershire we are told that the peasants are sometimes *poake ledden*, that is, misled by a mischievous spirit called *Poake*. 'Pouk-laden' is also given in Hartshorne's *Shropshire Glossary*. [The inquisitive student, the *very* inquisitive student, is referred to BELL'S *Shakespeare's Puck*, 3 vols. 1852–64, where will be found a mass of Folk-lore of varying value, whereof the drift may be learned from an assertion by the author (vol. iii, p. 176) to the effect that 'unless this entire work hitherto is totally valueless, it must follow that our poet's original view of this beautiful creation [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*] is entirely owing to foreign support.'—ED.]

26. **Philostrate**] FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p. 185) says that Shakespeare got this name from Chaucer's *Knighte's Tale*.

MALONE in his *Life of Shakespeare* (Var. '21, ii, 491) suggests that not a journey between London and Stratford was made by Shakespeare which did not probably supply materials for subsequent use in his plays; 'and of this,' he goes on to say, 'an instance has been recorded by Mr. Aubrey: "The humour of . . . the cunstable in a Midsomer's Night's Dreame, he happened to take at Grenden in Bucks (I thinke it was Midsomer Night that he happened to lye there) which is the roade from London to Stratford, and there was living that constable about 1642, when I first came to Oxon: Mr. Jos. Howe is of the parish, and knew him" [Halliwell, *Memoranda*, &c. 1879, p. 31]. It must be acknowledged that there is here a slight mistake, there being no such character as a constable in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The person in contemplation probably was Dogberry in *Much Ado*.'

A

MIDSOMMER
Nights Dreame.

Actus primus. [*Scene I.*]

Enter Theſeus, Hippolita, with others.

Theſeus.

NOw faire Hippolita, our nuptiall houre
Drawes on apace: foure happy daies bring in
Another Moon: but oh, me thinkes, how ſlow
This old Moon wanes; She lingers my deſires

Midſommer Nights] Midſummers nights F_3F_4 (thus also throughout in running title). Midsummer-Night's Rowe.

1. Actus primus.] Om. Qq.

[Scene, *the Duke's Palace in* Athens. Theob. A State-Room in Theseus's Palace. Cap.

2. with others.] with Attendants. Rowe. Philostrate, with Attendants. Theob.

4. *houre*] *hower* Q_1.

5. *apace*] *apaſe* Q_1.
foure] *fower* Q_1.

6. *Another*] *An other* Q_1.
me thinkes] *me-thinks* Q_2.

7. *wanes ;*] *waues /* Q_1. *wanes :* Q_2. *wanes ?* Ff. *wanes /* Rowe et seq.

7. *deſires*] *deſires,* Q_1.

1. **Actus primus**] The division into Acts is marked only in the Folios; neither in the Quartos nor in the Folios is there any division into Scenes. The division into Scenes which has most generally obtained is that of CAPELL, which I have followed here, with the exception of the last Act, wherein I have followed the CAMBRIDGE EDITION. Albeit Capell's division is open to criticism, particularly in the Second Act, the whole subject is, I think, a matter of small moment to the student, and more concerns the stage-manager, who, after all, will make his own division to suit his public, regardless of the weight of any name or text, wherein he is quite right. For the student it is important that there should be some standard of Act, Scene, and Line for the purpose of reference. This standard is supplied in *The Globe* edition.—ED.

7. **lingers**] For other instances of this active use, see SCHMIDT *s. v.*, or ABBOTT, § 290.

Like to a Step-dame, or a Dowager, 8
Long withering out a yong mans reuennew.
Hip. Foure daies wil quickly ſteep thẽſelues in nights 10
Foure nights wil quickly dreame away the time:
And then the Moone, like to a ſiluer bow,
Now bent in heauen, ſhal behold the night 13

8. *Step-dame*] *Stepdame* Q_1. *Step-dam* Q_2.
withering out] *wintering on* Warb. *withering-out* Cap. *widowing on* Gould.
9. *yong*] *young* $Q_2F_3F_4$.
10, 11. *Foure*] *Fower* Q_1.
10. *nights*] *night:* Q_1, Theob. Warb. Johns. Cam. Wr. Wh. ii. *nights*, Ff et cet. (subs.).
11. *nights*] *daies* Q_2.
13. *Now bent*] QqFf, Coll. i. *Never bent* Johns. *New bent* Rowe et cet. (hyphened by Dyce.)
night] *height* Daniel.

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8. **Dowager**] CAPELL: Dowagers that are long-lived wither out estates with a witness, when their jointures are too large, and what remains too little for the heir's proper supportance; whose impatience to bury them must (in that case) be of the strongest degree.

9. **withering out**] STEEVENS: Thus, 'And there the goodly plant lies withering out his grace.'—Chapman, *Iliad*, iv, 528. [This is quoted in reply to Warburton's assertion that 'withering out' is not good English.]—WHALLEY (p. 55): Compare, 'Ut piger annus Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum; Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora.'—*Horace, Epist.* I, i. 21.

10. **nights**] Independently of the avoidance of the repetition of the word in the next line, and of sibilants, I prefer the abstract *night* of Q_1.—ED.

13. **Now bent**] ROWE changed this to 'new bent,' and has been followed, I think, by every subsequent editor, except by Dr Johnson, and by Collier in his First Edition. Johnson's 'never bent' must be, of course, a misprint, although no correction of it is made in his *Appendix*, where similar misprints are corrected. The CAM. ED. does not note it.—KNIGHT, while accepting *new*, believes that it was used in the sense of 'now,' a belief which probably arose from the very common misprint of the one word for the other.—DYCE (*Rem.* p. 44) says that this misprint of 'now' for *new* is 'one of the commonest.'—'However graceful as the opening of the play,' says HUNTER (*Illust.* i, 287), 'and however pleasing these lines may be, they exhibit proof that Shakespeare, like Homer, may sometimes slumber; for, as the old moon had still four nights to run, it is quite clear that at the time Hippolyta speaks of there would be no moon, either full-orbed or "like to a silver bow," to beam on their solemnities, or to make up for the deficient properties of those who were to represent Pyramus and Thisbe, by moonlight, at the tomb of Ninus.'—COLLIER, in his first ed. believes that the difficulty may be solved by restoring the original reading, whereof the meaning is that 'then the moon, which is *now* bent in heaven like a silver bow, shall behold the night of our solemnities.' This is specious, but on reflection I think we shall find that DYCE (*Rem.* p. 44) puts it none too strongly when he says: 'If Shakespeare had written "Now," intending the passage to have the meaning which Mr Collier gives it, I feel convinced that he would have adopted a different collocation of words.'—COLLIER in his next edition adopted *New* on the authority of his 'old annotator.'—FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p.

Of our ſolemnities.
The. Go *Philoſtrate*,
Stirre vp the Athenian youth to merriments,
Awake the pert and nimble ſpirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy forth to Funerals:
The pale companion is not for our pompe,

16. *the*] *th'* Pope, Theob. Han. Warb.
17. *pert*] *peart* Qq.
18. *melancholy*] *melancholly* F_3F_4.
19. *pompe*,] *pompe*. Qq. [Exit *Phil.* Theob.

185): The time-analysis of this play has probably been disturbed by omissions in producing the Court version. I, i, 136–265 ought to form, and probably did, in the original play, a separate scene; it certainly does not take place in tbe palace. To the same cause must be attributed the confusion as to the moon's age; cf. I, i, 222 with the opening lines; the new moon was an after-thought, and evidently derived from a form of the story in which the first day of the month and the new moon were coincident, after the Greek time-reckoning.

14. **solemnities**] Just as *solemn* frequently means *formal, ceremonious*, so here 'solemnities' refers, I think, to the ceremonious celebration of the nuptials, and is used more in reference to the idea of ceremony than of festivity. Theseus afterwards uses it (IV, i, 203) again in the same sense, 'We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.' —ED.

15. **Philostrate**] A trisyllable, see V, i, 43, where the Qq give *Philostrate* instead of 'Egeus,' and where the scanning proves that it is trisyllabic.—ED.

16. **merriments**] I think the final *s* is as superfluous here as just above in 'nights.'—ED.

17. **pert**] SKEAT (*Dict. s. v.*): In Shakespeare [this] means *lively, alert*. Middle English, *pert*, which, however, has two meanings and two sources, and the meanings somewhat run into one another. 1. In some instances *pert* is certainly a corruption of *apert*, and *pertly* is used for 'openly' or 'evidently,' see *Will. of Palerne*, 4930, &c. In this case the source is the French *apert*, open, evident, from Lat. *apertus*. 2. But we also find 'proud and pert,' Chaucer, *Cant. T.* 3948; 'Stout he was and *pert*,' *Li Beaus Disconus*, l. 123 (Ritson). There is an equivalent form, *perk*, which is really older; the change from *k* to *t* taking place occasionally, as in Eng. *mate* from Mid. Eng. *make*. ['Pert' is still a common word in New England, used exactly in the Shakespearian sense and pronounced as it is spelled in the Qq, *peart*, i. e. *peert*.—ED.]

19. **The**] GREY (i, 41): I am apt to believe that the author gave it, '*That* pale companion,' which has more force. And, besides the moon, another pale companion was to be witness to the marriage pomp and solemnity, as Hippolyta had said just before. 'The moon,' &c.—*Anon.*

19. **companion**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, fellow. These two words have completely exchanged their meanings in later usage. 'Companion' is not now used contemptuously as it once was, and as *fellow* frequently is. [SCHMIDT'S examples are not appropriately distributed under the several shades of meaning of this word; the contemptuous tone in many of them is not caught.—ED.]

19. **pompe**] 'Funerals,' with its imagery of long processions, suggested here, I think, this word 'pompe' in its classic sense. See note on line 23 below.—ED.

Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my ſword,
And wonne thy loue, doing thee iniuries:
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pompe, with triumph, and with reuelling.

Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, Lyſander, and Demetrius.

Ege. Happy be *Theſeus*, our renowned Duke.

23. *reuelling*] *revelry* T. White, Coll. MS, Ktly.
24. Lyſander] and *Lyſander*. and *Helena*, Q_1. and Lyſander, Helena, Q_2.
26. *Duke.*] *duke* Q_2 (Ashbee). *duke.* Q_1 (Griggs).

19. WHITE (ed. i): At the end of Theseus's address to Philostrate it has been the practice in modern editions to mark his exit. But such literalism is almost puerile. Theseus surely did not mean that Philostrate should then rush out incontinent, and begin on the moment to awake 'the pert and nimble spirit of mirth' in the Athenian youth. [Philostrate must leave at once, if he is the 'double' of Egeus.—ED.]

20. **Hippolita, &c.**] GREY (i, 41), followed by KNIGHT, here quotes a long passage from Chaucer's *Knighte's Tale*, beginning at line 860: 'Whilom as olde stories tellen us, There was a duk that highte Theseus,' &c. See Appendix, 'Source of the Plot.'—ED.

23. **pompe,**] WARTON (quoted by W. A. WRIGHT) in a note on Milton's *Samſon Agoniſtes*, 1312: 'This day to Dagon is a solemn feast, With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games,' suggests that Milton applied 'pomp' to the appropriated sense which it bore to the Grecian festivals, where the *πομπή*, a principal part of the ceremony, was the spectacular procession. Shakespeare, adds WRIGHT, in *King John*, III, i, 304, also has the word with a trace of its original meaning: 'Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums, Clamours of hell, be measures of our pomp?'

23. **triumph**] MALONE: By triumph, as Mr Warton has observed, we are to understand *shows*, such as masks, revels, &c.—STEEVENS: In the *Duke of Anjou's Entertainment at Antwerp*, 1581: 'Yet notwithstanding their triumphes [those of the Romans] have so borne the bell above all the rest, that the word *triumphing*, which cometh thereof, *hath beene applied to all high, great, and statelie dooings*.'—W. A. WRIGHT: The title of Bacon's 37th *Essay* is 'Of Masques and Triumphs,' and the two words appear to have been synonymous, for the Essay treats of masques alone. [Falstaff says of Pistol: 'O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light!'—*1 Hen. IV:* III, iii, 46.]

23. **reuelling**] T. WHITE (ap. Fennell): There is scarcely a scene in this play which does not conclude with a rhyming couplet. I have no doubt, therefore, Shakespeare wrote 'revel*ry*.' [Before this emendation can be considered we must know the pronunciation both of 'key' and of 'revelry' in Shakespeare's time. It is by no means impossible that 'revelry,' where the *y* final is unaccented, was pronounced *revelrei*. If the word be spelled *revelrie*, then it may rhyme with 'key,' if we were sure that Shakespeare did not pronounce that word *kay*. Dryden (Ellis, i, 87) rhymes *key* with *lay, sway, prey*.—KEIGHTLEY'S positive assertion that *revelry* is the 'right word' alone justifies any extended notice of White's emendation, which happens to be also one of Collier's 'Old Corrector's.'—ED.]

26. **Duke.**] The notes in the Variorum, 1821, afford abundant examples, if any be

The. Thanks good *Egeus*: what's the news with thee? 27
Ege. Full of vexation, come I, with complaint
Againſt my childe, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth Dometrius. 30
My Noble Lord,
This man hath my conſent to marrie her.
Stand forth Lyſander.
And my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the boſome of my childe: 35
Thou, thou *Lyſander*, thou haſt giuen her rimes,
And interchang'd loue-tokens with my childe:
Thou haſt by Moone-light at her window ſung,
With faining voice, verſes of faining loue, 39

27. Egeus:] Egeus. Qq.
what's] *Whats* Q_2.
30. As beginning line 31, Rowe et seq.
Dometrius] F_2.
33. As beginning line 34, Rowe et seq.
Lyſander] Liſander Q_2.
35. *This man*] *This* Ff, Rowe, Pope, Cap. Mal. Steev. Var.
35. *bewitch'd*] *witch'd* Theob. Warb. Johns. Dyce ii, iii, Ktly, Huds.
36. *Thou, thou*] *Thou*, Gould.
37. *loue-tokens*] *loue tokens* Qq. *love-token* F_4.
38. *haſt...light*] *haſt,...light*, Q_2.
39. *faining loue*] *feigned love* Han. Walker (*Crit.* iii, 46).

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needed, of the use of this title, in our early literature, applied to any great leader, such as 'Duke Hamilcar,' 'Duke Hasdrubal,' 'Duke Æneas,' and, in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, cited above, 'Duk Theseus,' where, it has been suggested, Shakespeare found it.—ED.

27. **Egeus**] As has been already noted this is a trisyllable, with the accent on the middle syllable. The Second Folio spells it 'Egæus.'

30, 33. These lines are clearly part of the text, but being in the imperative mood, so familiar in stage-copies, the compositor mistook them for stage-directions, and set them up accordingly.—ED.

35. The Textual Notes show the editorial struggles to evade what has been deemed the defective metre of this line. It is needful to retain 'man' as an antithesis to 'man' in line 32; and the change of 'bewitch'd' into *witch'd* has only THEOBALD for authority. To my ear the line is rendered smooth by reducing 'hath' to *'th*; 'This man 'th bewitch'd,' &c.—just as in the next line 'thou 'st given her rhymes' better accords with due emphasis than 'thou hast giv'n her rhymes.'—ED.

39. **faining voice . . . faining loue**] It is not easy to see why every editor, without exception, I believe, should have followed ROWE'S change to *feigning*, a change which HUNTER (*Illust.* i, 287) characterises, properly I think, as 'injudicious.' Surely there was nothing feigned nor false in Lysander's love, nor any discernible reason why he should sing in a falsetto voice. His love was sincere, and because it was outspoken Demetrius's wrath was stirred. HALLIWELL says that probably 'Egeus intended to imply that the love of Lysander was assumed and deceptive,' but there is no intimation of this anywhere except in this change by Rowe. I cannot but think that the original word of the QqFf is here correct, and

And ſtolne the impreſſion of her fantaſie,
With bracelets of thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceits,
Knackes, trifles, Noſe-gaies, ſweet meats (meſſengers
Of ſtrong preuailment in vnhardned youth)
With cunning haſt thou filch'd my daughters heart,
Turn'd her obedience (which is due to me)
To ſtubborne harſhneſſe. And my gracious Duke,
Be it ſo ſhe will not heere before your Grace,
Conſent to marrie with *Demetrius*,
I beg the ancient priuiledge of Athens;
As ſhe is mine, I may diſpoſe of her;
Which ſhall be either to this Gentleman,
Or to her death, according to our Law,
Immediately prouided in that caſe.

42, 43. (*meſſengers ... youth*)] No parenthesis, Rowe.
42. *Noſe-gaies*] *noſegaies* Qq.
43. *vnhardned*] *vnhardened* Qq. *unharden'd* Rowe.
44. *filch'd*] *filcht* Qq.
46. *harſhneſſe*] *hardness* Coll. (MS).
47. *Be it*] *Be't* Pope+, Dyce iii.
47. *ſo...heere*] *ſo,...heere*, Q_2.
48. Demetrius,] Demetrius. Q_2 (Griggs).
49. *ancient*] *auncient* Q_1.
Athens;] *Athens:* Q_2. *Athens*, Ff.
52. *death,*] *death;* Q_2.

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that it is used in its not unusual sense of *loving, longing, yearning*. So far from *feigning* being the true word, I think a better paraphrase of 'faining' would be *love-sick*.—ED.

40. **stolne the impression of her fantasie**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, secretly stamped his image on her imagination. [This 'impression,' taken, as it were, on yielding wax, *may* have suggested the use of the word 'unhardened' in line 43, and Theseus's words in 57, 58.—ED.]

41. **gawdes**] W. A. WRIGHT: Trifling ornaments, toys. Both 'gawd' and *jewel* are derived from the Latin *gaudium;* the latter coming to us immediately from the Old French *joel*, which is itself *gaudiale*.

41. **conceits**] *Gentileſſes:* Prettie conceits, deuiſes, knacks, feats, trickes.—Cotgrave.

47. **Be it so**] ABBOTT, § 133: 'So' seems to mean *in this way, on these terms*, and the full construction is, 'be it (if it be) *so* that.' See 'so,' III, ii, 329, *post*.

52. **to her death**] WARBURTON: By a law of Solon's, parents had an absolute power of life and death over their children. So it suited the poet's purpose well enough to suppose the Athenians had it before. Or perhaps he neither thought nor knew anything of the matter.

53. **Immediately, &c.**] STEEVENS: Shakespeare is grievously suspected of having been placed, while a boy, in an attorney's office. The line before us has an undoubted smack of legal common-place. Poetry disclaims it.

The. What ſay you Hermia? be aduis'd faire Maide,
To you your Father ſhould be as a God;
One that compos'd your beauties; yea and one
To whom you are but as a forme in waxe
By him imprinted: and within his power,
To leaue the figure, or disfigure it:
Demetrius is a worthy Gentleman.
Her. So is *Lyſander.*
The. In himſelfe he is.
But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voyce.
The other muſt be held the worthier.
Her. I would my Father look'd but with my eyes.
The. Rather your eies muſt with his iudgment looke.
Her. I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,
Nor how it may concerne my modeſtie
In ſuch a preſence heere to pleade my thoughts:
But I beſeech your Grace, that I may know
The worſt that may befall me in this caſe,
If I refuſe to wed *Demetrius.*
The. Either to dye the death, or to abiure

54. *Maide,*] *maid.* Q_2Ff.
55. *To you*] *To you,* Q_2.
59. *leaue*] *'leve* Warb.
61. Lyſander] Liſander Q_1.
63. *voyce.*] *voice,* Qq. *voice* Ff.
66. *looke.*] *looke,* Q_2.
67. *me.*] *me,* Ff.
68. *bold*] *bould* Q_1.
70. *preſence*] *preſence,* Qq.

58. **power**] For other examples of an ellipsis of *it is*, see ABBOTT, § 403.

59. **leaue**] Warburton's emendation, *'leve*, is incomprehensible without a word of explanation. It stands for '*releve*, to heighten or add to the beauty of the figure, which is said to be *imprinted by him*. 'Tis from the French *relever*.'—JOHNSON: The sense is,—you owe to your father a being which he may at pleasure continue or destroy.

63. **in this kinde**] This phrase, like Hermia's 'in this case,' line 72, refers to the present question of marriage.—ED.

69. **concerne my modestie**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, nor how much it may affect my modesty. [Is it not rather, how much it may affect my reputation for modesty?—ED.]

74. **dye the death**] JOHNSON: This seems to be a solemn phrase for death inflicted by law.—Note on *Meas. for Meas.* II, iv, 165.—W. A. WRIGHT: Generally, but not uniformly, applied to death inflicted by law; for instance, it is apparently an intensive phrase in Sackville's *Induction*, line 55: 'It taught mee well all earthly things be borne To dye the death.' Shakespeare, however, uses the expression always of a judicial punishment. Cf. *Ant. and Cleop.* IV, xiv, 26: 'She hath be-

For euer the ſociety of men.
Therefore faire Hermia queſtion your deſires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether (if you yeeld not to your fathers choice)
You can endure the liuerie of a Nunne,
For aye to be in ſhady Cloiſter mew'd,
To liue a barren ſiſter all your life,
Chanting faint hymnes to the cold fruitleſſe Moone,
Thrice bleſſed they that maſter ſo their blood,
To vndergo ſuch maiden pilgrimage,
But earthlier happie is the Rose diſtil'd,

77. *blood,*] *blood.* F_3F_4.
78. *if you yeeld not*] *not yielding* Pope, Han.
81. *barren*] *barraine* Q_2.
82. *Chanting*] *Chaunting* Q_2.
83. *their*] *there* Q_1.
84. *pilgrimage,*] *pilgrimage.* F_3F_4.
85. *earthlier happie*] *earthlyer happy* Q_1. *earthlier happy* Q_2. *earlier happy* Rowe ii. *earthly happier* Cap. Knt, Coll. i, ii, Sing. Sta. *earthlier-happy* Walker, Dyce, Huds.
diſtil'd] *diſtol'd* Gould (p. 56).

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tray'd me and shall die the death.' Even when Cloten says (*Cym.* IV, ii, 96) to Guiderius, 'Die the death,' he looks upon himself as the executioner of a judicial sentence in killing an outlaw. See *Matthew* xv, 4.

77. **Know**] STAUNTON: That is, ascertain from your youth.

77. **blood**] DYCE: That is, disposition, inclination, temperament, impulse.—W. A. WRIGHT: Passion as opposed to reason. See below, line 83, and *Ham.* III, ii, 74: 'Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled.'

78. **Whether**] For multitudinous instances of this monosyllabic pronunciation, see WALKER, *Vers.* 103, or ABBOTT, § 466, or Shakespeare *passim.*

79. **Nunne**] W. A. WRIGHT: For the word 'nun,' applied to a woman in the time of Theseus, see North's *Plutarch* (1631), p. 2: 'But Egeus desiring (as they say) to know how he might haue children, went into the city of Delphes, to the Oracle of Apollo: where, by a Nunne of the temple, this notable prophecie was giuen him for an answer.' 'Livery,' which now denotes the dress of servants, formerly signified any distinctive dress, as in the present passage. Cf. *Pericles*, II, v, 10; and III, iv, 10.

82. **faint**] ROLFE: That is, without feeling or fervour. [But is such an imputation of insincerity, almost of hypocrisy, in keeping with the dignified seriousness of the Duke's adjuration? May it not be that midnight hymns chanted by nuns within a convent's walls must always sound 'faint' to the ears of men outside?—ED.]

83, 84. **so . . . To**] For instances of the omission of *as* after *so*, see ABBOTT, § 281.

84. **pilgrimage**] W. A. WRIGHT: This sense of 'pilgrimage' is in accordance with the usage of Scripture. Compare *Genesis* xlvii, 9: 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years.' And *As You Like It*, III, ii, 138: 'how brief the life of man Runs his erring pilgrimage.'

85. **earthlier happie**] JOHNSON: 'Earthlier' is so harsh a word, and 'earthlier

Then that which withering on the virgin thorne, 86

86. *Then*] *Than* F_4.

happy,' for *happier earthly*, a mode of speech so unusual, that I wonder none of the editors have proposed *earlier happy* [see Textual Notes].—STEEVENS: We might read, *earthly happy*.—KNIGHT (who follows Capell): If, in the orthography of the Folio, the comparative had not been used, it would have been *earthlie happie;* and it is easy to see, therefore, that the *r* has been transposed.—HUNTER (i, 288): This is perhaps one of Shakespeare's 'unfiled expressions,' one which he would have a little polished had he ever 'blotted a line,' and yet the words after all convey their meaning with sufficient clearness. The virgin is thrice blessed, as respects the heaven for which she prepares herself; but, looking only to the present world, the other is the happier lot. [The objections to Capell's reading] are, 1st, that it is against authority; 2d, that nothing is gained by it; 3d, that if there is any difference in the meaning it is a deterioration, not an improvement; and 4th, that it spoils the melody.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Capell's change substitutes a comparison of degree for one of kind, impairs the rhythm of the line, gives a weak thought for a strong one, is based on a limitation of the flexibility of the language even in the hands of Shakespeare, and, in short, is little less than barbarous. There is no better adjective than *earthly*, and none which can be better made comparative or superlative.—WALKER (*Crit.* i, 27): If, indeed, it be not too obvious, this means *more earthly-happy*. [Both WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 46) and HALLIWELL (*ad loc.*) cite Erasmus's *Colloquies, Colloq. Proci et Puellæ*,—'Ego rosam existimo feliciorem, quæ marescit in hominis manu, delectans interim et oculos et nares, quam quæ senescit in frutice.'—DYCE: *Earthy happier* is a more correct expression, doubtless; but Shakespeare (like his contemporaries) did not always write *correctly*.—J. F. MARSH (*Notes & Qu.* 5th, x, 243, 1878) asserts that it is impossible to make sense of this passage. 'Happiness is predicated of both roses. The earthliness only of their happiness is the subject of comparison. The distilled rose enjoys a more earthly, and the withered rose a less earthly, happiness, and the more earthly happiness is assumed to be the preferable state. This, the only possible construction, is a *reductio ad absurdum*.' [Marsh hereupon suggests that *eathlier* is a word which differs from the text by the omission of only a single letter. '"Uneath" is found in *2 Hen. VI:* II, iv, 8; Spenser in many places has *eath* as an adjective; Fairfax's *Tasso* has *eathest;* and Peele, *Honour of the Garter*, has *eathly* as an adverb, of which the word now proposed would be the regular comparative form. . . . True, I find no authority for the exact word; but the very fact of its being unusual would increase its liability to be misprinted by the substitution of a word so very like it in appearance.' It is proper to add that Marsh would not disturb the present text, because sanctioned by the authority of the QqFf, but where sense is impossible he holds conjectures to be legitimate. At one time he was 'half inclined to suggest the possibility that *rathelier* was the original word.' Marsh is the only critic, I believe, who finds the meaning obscure; it is the 'unusual mode of speech' which has given rise to discussion. Theseus's meaning is clear, however much we may disagree with the sentiment, that in an earthly sense the married woman is happier than the spinster.—ED.]

85. **distil'd**] MALONE: This is a thought in which Shakespeare seems to have much delighted. We meet with it more than once in the *Sonnets*. See *Sonnet* 5: 'But flowers distill'd, though they with winter meet, Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.' So also *Sonn.* 54.

Growes, liues, and dies, in ſingle bleſſedneſſe. 87
Her. So will I grow, ſo liue, ſo die my Lord,
Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent vp
Vnto his Lordſhip, whoſe vnwiſhed yoake, 90
My ſoule conſents not to giue ſoueraignty.
The. Take time to pauſe, and by the next new Moon
The ſealing day betwixt my loue and me,
For euerlaſting bond of fellowſhip:
Vpon that day either prepare to dye, 95
For diſobedience to your fathers will,
Or elſe to wed *Demetrius* as hee would,
Or on *Dianaes* Altar to proteſt
For aie, auſterity, and ſingle life.
Dem. Relent ſweet *Hermia*, and *Lyſander*, yeelde 100
Thy crazed title to my certaine right.
Lyſ. You haue her fathers loue, *Demetrius*: 102

90. *whoſe vnwiſhed*] *to whoſe vnwiſhed* F_2F_3. *to whoſe unwiſhd* F_4, Rowe+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Coll.
96. *your*] *you* F_2.
97 transpose to follow 99, Wagner conj.

89. **virgin Patent**] That is, my patent to be a virgin.

90. **Lordship**] KNIGHT: That is, authority. The word *dominion* in our present translation of the Bible (*Romans* vi) is *lordship* in Wicklif's translation.

90. **whose**] The instances given by ABBOTT, § 201, of the omission of the preposition before the indirect object of some verbs, such as *say*, *question*, and, in the present instance, *consent*, show that the insertion of 'to' in F_2 was needless.

91. After this line, Hermia, in Garrick's Version, 1763, sings the following song, the music by 'Mr Smith':—

'With mean disguise let others nature hide,
And mimick virtue with the paint of art;
I scorn the cheat of reason's foolish pride,
And boast the graceful weakness of my heart;
The more I think, the more I feel my pain,
And learn the more each heav'nly charm to prize;
While fools, too light for passion, safe remain,
And dull sensation keeps the stupid wise.'

93, 94. **sealing . . . bond**] Again legal phraseology.

101. **crazed title**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, a title with a flaw in it. Compare Lyly's *Euphues* (ed. Arber), p. 58: 'Yes, yes, *Lucilla*, well doth he knowe that the glasse once crased, will with the least clappe be cracked.'—D. WILSON (*Caliban*, &c., p. 242): Query, *razed* title. The decision of Theseus has just been given, by which all claim or title of Lysander to Hermia's hand is erased. The word *razed* repeatedly occurs in this sense in the dramas.

Let me haue *Hermiaes* : do you marry him.
Egeus. Scornfull *Lyſander*, true, he hath my Loue;
Aud what is mine, my loue ſhall render him.
And ſhe is mine, and all my right of her,
I do eſtate vnto *Demetrius.*
Lyſ. I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as he,
As well poſſeſt : my loue is more then his :
My fortunes euery way as fairely ranck'd
(If not with vantage) as *Demetrius* :
And (which is more then all theſe boaſts can be)
I am belou'd of beauteous *Hermia.*
Why ſhould not I then proſecute my right?
Demetrius, Ile auouch it to his head,
Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,
And won her ſoule : and ſhe (ſweet Ladie) dotes,
Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,
Vpon this ſpotted and inconſtant man.

103. Hermiaes] *Hermia* Tyrwhitt.
104. Lyſander,] Lyſander: F_3F_4. Lysander! Rowe.
106. *her*,] F_2. *her* QqF_3F_4.
109. *then*] *than* Q_1F_4.
110. *fortunes*] *Fortune's* Rowe, Pope, Theob. Warb. Johns.
111. Demetrius] Demetrius' Han. Demetrius's Johns.
113. *beauteous*] *beautious* Qq.
115. *Ile*] *I'le* F_3F_4.

107. **estate vnto**] If Shakespeare elsewhere discloses the lawyer, he betrays the layman here. A lawyer would, instinctively almost, say 'estate *upon*' or '*on*,' as, indeed, Shakespeare has done elsewhere, in the only two places, I believe, in which he has used the verb: *Temp.* IV, i, 85, and *As You Like It*, V, ii, 13. HANMER incontinently changed it to *upon*.—ED.

113. **beauteous**] The spelling 'beautious' in the two Quartos may possibly indicate a pronunciation of *ti* like *sh*. If so, it is possibly the pronunciation of merely the compositors, and it is somewhat strange that both of them should here agree. This is another reminder of the gap which lies between Shakespeare and us, and of the futility of examining microscopically the spelling or even the punctuation of his plays as they have been transmitted to us.—ED.

115. **to his head**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, before his face, openly and unreservedly. Compare *Meas. for Meas.* IV, iii, 147; *Much Ado*, V, i, 62.

116. **Nedars**] WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 30): Perhaps a mistake of the printer's for *Nestor*,—of course not the Pylian. 'Very unlikely, I think,' adds Dyce (ed. ii). [*If* this play is founded on an older play, we have here, perchance, a reminiscence of the original, or, which I think more likely, this familiar reference is designed merely to give vividness.—ED.]

119. **spotted**] JOHNSON: As *spotless* is innocent, so 'spotted' is wicked.—D. WILSON (p. 243): No one would venture to disturb the text. But I may note here

The. I muſt confeſſe, that I haue heard ſo much,
And with *Demetrius* thought to haue ſpoke thereof:
But being ouer-full of ſelfe-affaires,
My minde did loſe it. But *Demetrius* come,
And come *Egeus*, you ſhall go with me,
I haue ſome priuate ſchooling for you both.
For you faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your ſelfe,
To fit your fancies to your Fathers will;
Or elſe the Law of Athens yeelds you vp
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vow of ſingle life.
Come my *Hippolita*, what cheare my loue?
Demetrius and *Egeus* go along:
I muſt imploy you in ſome buſineſſe
Againſt our nuptiall, and conferre with you
Of ſomething, neerely that concernes your ſelues.
Ege. With dutie and deſire we follow you. *Exeunt*
Manet Lyſander and Hermia.

123. *loſe*] *looſe* Q_1.
127. *fancies*] *fancy* Ktly conj.
133. *imploy*] *employ* $Q_1F_3F_4$.
134. *nuptiall*] *nuptialls* Ff, Rowe+.
137. Manet...] Om. Qq.
[Scene II. Pope, Han. Warb. Fleay.

a conjectural change as harmonising, by antithesis with Helena's 'devout idolatry' to her forsworn lover: ''*Pon this apostate and*,' &c.

122. **selfe-affaires**] For similar compounds with *self*, see ABBOTT, § 20.

126. **For**] For other instances of this use in the sense of *as regards*, see ABBOTT, § 149.

131. **Hippolita**] WARBURTON: Hippolita had not said one single word all this while. Had a modern poet had the teaching of her, we should have found her the busiest amongst them; and, without doubt, the Lovers might have expected a more equitable decision. But Shakespeare knew better what he was about, and observed decorum.

134. **nuptiall**] W. A. WRIGHT: Shakespeare, except in two instances [*Othello*, II, ii, 8, and *Pericles*, V, iii, 80], employs the singular form of this word. In the same way we have 'funeral' and 'funerals.' Compare *Jul. Cæs.* V, iii, 105: 'His funerals shall not be in our camp'; although in this case it is the singular form that has survived. [As long as the source of our knowledge of Shakespeare's language is a text transmitted to us by several compositors, it is hazardous to assert that Shakespeare employs any special form of a word. In the instance from *Othello*, the Qq, it is true, have the plural, 'nuptialls,' but the word in the Ff is in the singular, as Wright himself notes, *Tempest*, V, i, 362, of this edition.—ED.]

135. **neerely**] For other transpositions of adverbs, see ABBOTT, § 421.

137. **Manet**, &c.] W. A. WRIGHT: It was a strange oversight on the part of

Lyſ. How now my loue? Why is your cheek ſo pale? 138
How chance the Roſes there do fade ſo faſt?
Her. Belike for want of raine, which I could well 140
Beteeme them, from the tempeſt of mine eyes.

141. *Beteeme*] *Bestream* or *Bestow* D. Wilson (withdrawn). 141. *mine*] *my* Qq, Cam. Wh. ii.

Egeus to leave his daughter with Lysander. VERITY: The plot requires this private conference between Hermia and Lysander, at which the scheme to leave Athens may be arranged. Shakespeare's device to bring about the conference is . . . artificial. . . . In his later plays, when he is more experienced in stage-craft, Shakespeare so contrives his plot that one event springs naturally from another, in accordance with probability. [As the *Text. Notes* show, POPE, followed by HANMER and WARBURTON, began here a new scene, but as these editors are wont to begin new scenes whenever there is any shifting of characters, small attention need be paid to their divisions. Yet, at the same time, a new scene, in spite of the *Manent*, &c. of F_1, would certainly help to remove the objections urged by WRIGHT and VERITY; and, indeed, such a division was proposed by FLEAY (*Robinson' Epit. of Lit.* Apr. 1879), on the ground that it is unlikely that Lysander and Hermia would indulge in confidential conversation in Theseus's palace, and that when Helena enters Hermia should say, 'God speed, fair Helena! *whither away?*'—this new scene, says FLEAY, 'is clearly in a street.' This last assertion reveals a difficulty in the way of adopting Fleay's proposed division. It is perhaps a little less likely that Lysander and Hermia would indulge in a confidential conversation in the open street than in an empty room of Theseus's palace. Finally, it is hard utterly to ignore the grey authority of the Folio with its *Manet*, when we are almost sure that the copy from which the Folio was printed was a stage-copy.—ED.]

139. **chance**] The full phrase would be, 'How chances it,' as in *Hamlet*, II, ii, 343: 'How chances it they travel?' See also *post*, V, i, 315; or ABBOTT, § 37.

140. **Belike**] W. A. WRIGHT: This word is unusual if not singular in form. It is recorded in Nodal and Milner's *Lancashire Glossary* as still in use.

141. **Beteeme**] POPE: Beteem, or pour down upon 'em. JOHNSON: Give them, bestow upon them. The word is used by Spenser. CAPELL: The word which Skinner explains—*effundere seu ab uno vase in aliud transfundere* is—teem; and is (it seems) a local word only, proper to Lincolnshire: so that the *particula otiosa* before it should be Shakespeare's; and he a user of other liberties with it, making 'beteem them' stand for 'beteem *to* them,' *i. e.* the roses: If the passage be uncorrupted, and this the sense of 'beteem' (of both which there is some suspicion), he must have us'd it that his verb might suit the strength of his substantive, 'tempest,' requiring—a pouring out. STEEVENS: 'So would I' (said th' enchaunter), 'glad and faine Beteeme to you this sword, you to defend.'—*Fairie Queene* [Bk II, canto viii, 19]. But I rather think that to 'beteem' in this place signifies (as in the northern counties) to *pour out*. [In a note on 'beteem' in *Hamlet*, I, ii, 141, Steevens says]: This word occurs in Golding's *Ovid*, 1587, and from the corresponding Latin word (*dignatur*, bk x, line 157) must necessarily mean to *vouchsafe, deign, permit*, or *suffer*. KNIGHT: That is, pour forth. COLLIER: To 'teem' is certainly to pour out, but that sense is hardly wanted here. [STAUNTON, R. G. WHITE, and W. A. WRIGHT all give the meaning *afford, yield, allow*. The last says there is 'probably

Lyſ. For ought that euer I could reade,
Could euer heare by tale or hiſtorie,
The courſe of true loue neuer did run ſmooth,
But either it was different in blood.
Her. O croſſe! too high to be enthral'd to loue.

142. *For*] *Eigh me: for* Qq. *Hermia, for* Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Wh. i. *Ah me, for* Johns. Steev. Mal. Knt, Coll. Sing. Hal. *Ay me! for* Dyce, Sta. Cam. Wh. ii.
ought] *aught* Q_1, Warb. Johns. Steev. et seq.
142. *euer I could*] *I could euer* Qq, Cap. Coll. Hal. Sta. Cam. Wh. ii.
143. *heare*] *here* Q_1.
145–147. *blood. ...yeares.*] *bloud;... yeares;* or *blood—...years—* Qq, Rowe et cet.
146. *enthral'd*] *inthrald* Qq.
loue] *low!* Theob. Warb. et seq.

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a reference to the other meaning of the word, *to pour*.' DYCE (*Gloss.*) gives a happy and concise paraphrase: 'to give in streaming abundance,' but even here it is not absolutely necessary to add the idea of abundance. 'Beteem' is here used, I think, exactly as it is asserted to be by Pope and suggested by Capell. The tempest of Hermia's eyes could readily pour down the rain to revive the roses in her cheeks.—ED.]

142. For] HUNTER (*Illust.* i, 288) finds in the 'Hermia' of the Second Folio (see Textual Notes) 'a point and pathos even beyond what the passage, as usually printed, possesses. A skilful actor might give great effect to the name; and we ought always to remember, what Shakespeare never forgot, that he was writing for spokesmen, not in the first instance for students in their closets.' R. G. WHITE (ed. i): The exclamation ['Ay me!'] is unsuited to Lysander and to his speech; and I believe that it was an error of the press, or of the transcribers, for the proper name, and that its absence in the Folio is the result of its erasure in the Quarto stage-copy, the interlineation of the correct word having been omitted by accident. [White's objections were removed before he printed his second edition. The line as it stands in the Folio is certainly deficient, and although I agree both with Hunter, that the direct personal address is more impressive, and with White, that 'Ay me' seems out of character and is somewhat lackadaisical, yet the authority of the Quartos greatly outweighs that of the Second Folio, and we cannot quite disregard it.—ED.]

144. **The course**, &c.] W. A. WRIGHT: Bishop Newton, in his edition of Milton [1749], called attention to the resemblance between Lysander's complaint and that of Adam in *Paradise Lost*, x, 898–906.

146, 148. COLERIDGE (p. 101): There is no authority for any alteration,—but I never can help feeling how great an improvement it would be, if the two former of Hermia's exclamations were omitted [lines 146 and 148];—the third and only appropriate one would then become a beauty, and most natural. HALLIWELL (*Introd.* p. 70) goes further, and thinks 'it cannot be denied' that Lysander's speech would be improved by the omission of all of Hermia's interpolations, and adds that Dodd and Planché have so printed it. This HALLIWELL afterwards modified by the reflection (p. 36, folio ed.) that 'the author evidently intended both the speakers should join in passionately lamenting the difficulties encountered in the path of love.'

146. **loue**] THEOBALD'S reasons for his change to *low*, which has been uniformly adopted from the days of Warburton, are that Hermia, if she undertakes to answer Lysander's complaint of the difference in blood, 'must necessarily say *law*. So the

Lyſ. Or elſe miſgraffed, in reſpect of yeares. 147
Her. O ſpight! too old to be ingag'd to yong.
Lyſ. Or elſe it ſtood vpon the choiſe of merit. 149

148. *to yong*] *too young* F_4, Rowe i. 149. *merit.*] Ff. *merit*— Rowe, Wh. i. *friends;* Qq et cet. *men* Coll. (MS).

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antithesis is kept up in the terms; and so she is made to condole the disproportion of blood and quality in lovers. And this is one of the curses, that Venus, on seeing Adonis dead, prophecies shall always attend love, in our author's *Venus and Adonis*, lines 1136–1140.'

147. **misgraffed**] That is, ill-grafted. SKEAT (s. v. *graff*): The form *graft* is corrupt, and due to a confusion with *graffed*, originally the past participle of *graff*. Shakespeare has 'grafted,' *Macb.* IV, iii, 51; but he has rightly also 'graft' as a past participle, *Rich. III:* III, vii, 127. The verb is formed from the substantive *graff*, a scion. Old French, *graffe, grafe*, a style for writing with a sort of pencil, whence French *greffe*, 'a graff, a slip, or young shoot.'—Cotgrave; so named from the resemblance of the cut slip to the shape of a pointed pencil. [See *As You Like It*, III, ii, 116, of this edition.]

147. **in respect**] The COWDEN-CLARKES (*Sh. Key*, p. 627): We have discovered recurrent traces of special features of style marking certain plays by Shakespeare, which lead us to fancy that he thought in that particular mode while he was writing that particular drama. Sometimes it is a peculiar word, sometimes a peculiar manner of construction, sometimes a peculiar fashion of employing epithets or terms in an unusual sense. Throughout [this present] play the word 'respect' is used somewhat peculiarly; so as to convey the idea of *regard* or *consideration*, rather than the more usually assigned one of *reverence* or *deference*, as in the present line; see also line 170, just below, II, ii, 217, and 232, V, i, 98.

149. **merit**] As the Folio was printed from the Second Quarto, and presumably a stage-copy at that, the substitution of the word 'merit' for 'friends' of the Quarto can hardly be deemed either a compositor's sophistication or an accident. A change so decided must have been made with authority; it is a change, moreover, not from an obscure word to a plainer word, but from a plain word to one more recondite in meaning. A 'choice of merit' is a choice enforced through desert or as a reward, qualities with which true love or 'sympathy in choice' can have nothing in common. It is a choice good enough in itself, but worldly-wise, calculating, one of the roughest of obstructions to the course of true love, in that it may be urged by parents so plausibly; and this very urging is implied in Hermia's phrase of choosing 'by another's eye,' and possibly the vehemence of her expletive indicates that this obstruction is the worst of the three. But with the exception of ROWE and R. G. WHITE (in his first edition) all editors have adopted 'friends' of the Quartos, and only two have any remarks on it. 'The alteration in the Folio,' says KNIGHT, 'was certainly not an accidental one, but we hesitate to adopt the reading, the meaning of which is more recondite than that of *friends*. The "choice of merit" is opposed to the "sympathy in choice," —the merit of the suitor recommends itself to "another's eye," but not to the person beloved.'—R. G. WHITE says, 'the "choice of merit" is, plainly enough, not the spontaneous, and at first unconscious, preference of the lover.' This is in his first edition; the second edition is silent.—The *Cambridge Editors* (vol i, *Preface*, xii) pronounce 'the reading of the Folios certainly wrong.' And yet, in spite of all,

Her. O hell! to chooſe loue by anothers eie.
Lyſ. Or if there were a ſimpathie in choiſe,
Warre, death, or ſickneſſe, did lay ſiege to it;
Making it momentarie, as a ſound:
Swift as a ſhadow, ſhort as any dreame,
Briefe as the lightning in the collied night,
That (in a ſpleene) vnfolds both heauen and earth;

150. *eie.*] *eyes* / Q_1, Coll. Wh. i, Dyce iii. *eyes.* Q_2, Cam. Wh. ii. *eye.* Ff, Rowe et cet.

153. *momentarie*] *momentany* Qq, Mal. Steev. Coll. Hal. Dyce, Sta. Cam.

156. *ſpleene*] *sheen* Han. MS conj. ap. Cam.

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after a careful review, as the Duke says in *As You Like It*, 'I would not change it.' —ED.]

153, &c. CAPELL: This passage rises to a pitch of sublimity that is not exceeded by any other in Shakespeare.

153. momentarie] JOHNSON: [*Momentany* of the Qq] is the old and proper word.—HENLEY: 'That short momentany rage' is an expression of Dryden.—KNIGHT: *Momentany* and 'momentary' were each indifferently used in Shakespeare's time. We prefer the reading of the Folio, because *momentary* occurs in four other passages of our poet's dramas; and this is a solitary example of the use of *momentany*, and that only in the Quartos. The reading of the Folio is invariably 'momentary.'—COLLIER: Stubbes, in 1593, preferred *momentany* to 'momentary,' where in the list of errors of the press, before his *Motive to Good Works*, he enumerated the misprinting of 'momentary,' instead of *momentany*, in the following passage, p. 188: 'this life is but momentary, short and transitory; no life, indeed, but a shadow of life.'—STAUNTON: We have improvidently permitted too many of our old expressions to become obsolete.—HALLIWELL: 'Momentary' is hardly to be considered a modernisation; in *Meas. for Meas.* III, i, 114, 'momentary' in F_1 and F_2 is altered to *momentany* in F_3 [and F_4.—ED.].—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 46): With *momentany* compare the old adjective *miscellany*, e. g. *miscellany poems*. Donne has *momentane*, *Sermon* cxlviii, ed. Alford,—'a single, and momentane, and transitory man.'—W. A. WRIGHT: *Momentany* seems to have been the earlier form, from Fr. *momentaine*, Lat. *momentaneus*.

154. swift as a shadow] Compare 'love's heralds should be thoughts, Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams, Driving back shadows over louring hills.' —*Rom. and Jul.* II, v, 4.—ED.

155. collied] STEEVENS: That is, *black, smutted with coal.* A word still used in the Midland counties.—HALLIWELL: 'I colowe, I make blake with a cole, *je charbonne*.'—Palsgrave, 1530. 'Colwyd, *carbonatus*.'—*Prompt. Parv.* ['Charbonné. Painted, marked, written, with a coale, collowed, smeered, blacked with coales; (hence) also, darkened.'—Cotgrave.]

156. spleene] WARBURTON: Shakespeare, always hurried on by the grandeur and multitude of his ideas, assumes, every now and then, an uncommon license in the use of his words. Particularly in complex moral modes it is usual with him to employ one only to express a very few *ideas* of that number of which it is composed. Thus, wanting here to express the ideas—*of a sudden*, or—*in a trice*, he uses the

And ere a man hath power to ſay, behold,
The iawes of darkneſſe do deuoure it vp:
So quicke bright things come to confuſion.
Her. If then true Louers haue beene euer croſt,
It ſtands as an edict in deſtinie:
Then let vs teach our triall patience,
Becauſe it is a cuſtomarie croſſe,
As due to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and ſighes,
Wiſhes and teares; poore Fancies followers.
Lyſ. A good perſwaſion; therefore heare me *Hermia,*

157. *behold*] *hehold* F_a.
158. *do*] *to* F_3F_4.
161. *It ſtands*] *If't stand* Rann conj.
164. *due*] *dewe* Q_2.

word 'spleen,' which, partially considered, signifying *a hasty sudden fit*, is enough for him, and he never troubles himself about the further or fuller use of the word. Here he uses 'spleen' for *a sudden hasty fit;* so, just the contrary, in *The Two Gent.* he uses 'sudden' for *splenetic:* 'sudden quips.' And it must be owned this sort of conversion adds a force to the diction.—NARES: In this sense of *violent haste* we do not find the word so used by other writers.—HUNTER (i, 289): This is a mistake; and it will be seen that a happier choice could not have been made than the poet has made of this word. 'Like winter fires that with disdainful heat The opposition of the cold defeat; And in an angry spleen do burn more fair The more encountered by the frosty air.'—*Verses* by Poole, before his *England's Parnassus*, 1637. So in Lithgow's *Nineteen Years Travels*, 1632, p. 61: 'All things below and above being cunningly perfected, . . . we recommend ourselves in the hands of the Almighty, and in the meanwhile attended their fiery salutations. In a *furious spleen*, the first holla of their courtesies, was the progress of a martial conflict,' &c. [This note of Hunter has been quoted by Staunton and by Halliwell, yet, as both Poole and Lithgow are post-Shakespearian, and possibly may have drawn the phrase from this very passage, its value as an illustration is doubtful.—ED.]

157. **say, behold**] Compare 'like the lightning which doth cease to be, Ere one can say "It lightens."'—*Rom. and Jul.* II, ii, 119.

161. **edict**] For a list of words in which the accent was formerly nearer the end than at present, see ABBOTT, § 490. W. A. WRIGHT notes that 'edict' has the accent on the penultimate in *1 Hen. IV:* IV, iii, 79.

165. **Fancies**] It is scarcely necessary to remark that in Shakespeare 'fancy' means *love;* see 'fancy free,' II, i, 170; 'fancy-sick,' III, ii, 99; and 'Helena, in fancy followed me,' IV, ii, 181. ARBER (*Introd. to Dryden's Essay on Dramatic Poesie.—Eng. Garner*, iii, 502) notes four changes of the meaning of 'fancy.' First, in the Elizabethan Age it was but another word for personal *Love* or *Affection*. Second, the Restoration Age understood by it, *Imagination, the mental power of picturing forth*. Third, Coleridge endeavoured yet further to distinguish between *Imagination* and *Fancy*. Fourth, it is now used in another sense, 'I do not *fancy* that,' equivalent to 'I do not *like* or *prefer* that.'

166. **perswasion**] SCHMIDT defines this as *opinion, belief*. W. A. WRIGHT suggests that as 'persuasion' signifies a *persuasive argument*, it may perhaps have that

I haue a Widdow Aunt, a dowager,
Of great reuennew, and ſhe hath no childe,
From Athens is her houſe remou'd ſeuen leagues,
And ſhe reſpects me, as her onely ſonne:
There gentle *Hermia*, may I marrie thee,
And to that place, the ſharpe Athenian Law
Cannot purſue vs. If thou lou'ſt me, then
Steale forth thy fathers houſe to morrow night:
And in the wood, a league without the towne,
(Where I did meete thee once with *Helena*,
To do obſeruance for a morne of May)

167. *Aunt*] *Ant* Q_2.
169. *remou'd*] *remote* Qq, Cap. Steev. Mal. Coll. Hal. Dyce, Sta. Cam.
170. Transposed to follow line 168, Johns. conj. Ktly, Huds.
173. *lou'ſt*] *loueſt* Qq.
177. *for a*] Ff, Rowe, Wh. i. *to the* Pope+. *to a* Qq, Cap. et cet.

sense here. Hermia's words have carried conviction to Lysander and persuaded him.—ED.

169, 170. JOHNSON proposed to transpose these lines, reading in line 169, 'Her house from Athens is,' &c.—KEIGHTLEY (p. 130): Common sense dictates this transposition. Line 170, it is evident, has been an addition made by the poet in the margin.

169. **remou'd**] A change to the 'remote' of the Qq is unnecessary. Familiarity has reconciled us to this word in *Hamlet*, 'It waves you to a more removed ground.' Again, *As You Like It*, III, ii, 331: 'Your accent is something finer, than you could purchase in so remoued a dwelling.'—ED.

174. **forth**] For other examples of 'forth,' used as a preposition equivalent to *from*, see ABBOTT, § 156.

175. **the wood, a league**] HALLIWELL: This wood in the next scene is called the 'Palace wood,' and is there described as being 'a mile without the town.' It appears that Shakespeare, in this and other instances, made a league and a mile synonymous. The league was certainly variously estimated. In Holland's translation of *Ammianus Marcellinus* it is reckoned as a mile and a half.

177. **obseruance**] KNIGHT: See Chaucer, *Knight's Tale*, 1500, where the very expression occurs: 'And for to doon his observance to May.' [I doubt if there be a breather of the world, whose native speech is English, who does not know that May-day is welcomed with more or less festivity. As W. A. WRIGHT says, 'scarcely an English poet from Chaucer to Tennyson is without a reference to the simple customs by which our ancestors celebrated the advent of the flowers.' Details of these customs, which are endless, can scarcely be said to be strictly illustrative of Shakespeare. To mention Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, or Chambers's *Book of Days* will be quite sufficient, and no student of Folk-lore will be at a loss for other quarters into which to pursue his enquiry.—ED.]

177. **for a**] That Chaucer, in the line quoted above, has the expression 'observance *to* May,' has been, I suppose, a sufficing reason for following the Quartos here, but the improvement is scarcely appreciable.—ED.

There will I ſtay for thee.
Her. My good *Lyſander*,
I ſweare to thee, by Cupids ſtrongeſt bow,
By his beſt arrow with the golden head,

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178. Hereupon, in Garrick's *Version*, Lysander sings as follows. (May we not assume that, foreseeing the inspiration which Milton would draw from this play, Lysander deems it no felony to convey freely from *L'Allegro*?)

'When that gay season did us lead
To the tann'd hay-cock in the mead,
When the merry bells rung round,
And the rebecks brisk did sound,
When young and old came forth to play
On a sunshine holyday;

'Let us wander far away,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray
O'er the mountains barren breast,
Where labouring clouds do often rest,
O'er the meads with daisies py'd,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide.'

179, &c. WARBURTON: Lysander does but just propose her running away from her father at midnight, and straight she is at her oaths that she will meet him at the place of rendezvous. Not one doubt or hesitation, not one condition of assurance for Lysander's constancy. Either she was nauseously coming, or she had before jilted him, and he could not believe her without a thousand oaths. But Shakespeare observed nature at another rate. The speeches are divided wrong. [Hereupon Warburton gives to Lysander lines 180–187 and to Hermia lines 188 and 189. This reading attracted but little attention in Warburton's own day, and still less since. If any answer be needed, it is sufficiently given by HEATH, who says (p. 42)]: No doubt [Hermia's] conduct is not to be justified according to the strict rules of prudence. But when it is considered that she is deeply in love, and a just allowance is made for the necessity of her situation, being but just sentenced either to death, a vow of perpetual virginity, or a marriage she detested, every equitable reader, and I am sure the fair sex in general, will be more inclined to pity than to blame her. . . . Lysander asks no oaths of her. They are the superfluous, but tender effusion of her own heartfelt passion. . . . Would any man in his senses, when he is giving the strongest assurances of his fidelity to his mistress, endeavour at the same time to defeat the purpose, and destroy the effect of them, by expressly reminding her how often her sex had been deceived and ruined by trusting to such security? Whereas in her mouth these expressions have the greatest beauty. She finely insinuates to her lover that she is not insensible of the hazard she runs from the entire confidence she reposes in him; but at the same time she lets him see that she loves him with a passion above being restrained by this or any other consideration. This excess of tenderness, expressed with so much delicacy, must very strongly affect every mind that is susceptible of a sympathy with these generous sentiments.

181. best arrow] HALLIWELL: An allusion to the two arrows mentioned in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, i, 466: ['tone causeth Loue, the tother doth it slake. That

By the ſimplicitie of Venus Doues,
By that which knitteth ſoules, and proſpers loue,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Qucene,
When the falſe Troyan vnder ſaile was ſeene,
By all the vowes that euer men haue broke,
(In number more then euer women ſpoke)
In that ſame place thou haſt appointed me,
To morrow truly will I meete with thee.
Lyſ. Keepe promiſe loue : looke here comes *Helena.*

Enter Helena.

Her. God ſpeede faire *Helena,* whither away?
Hel. Cal you me faire? that faire againe vnſay,
Demetrius loues you faire : O happie faire!

183. *loue*] *loues* Q_1, Pope et seq.
185. *Troyan*] *Trojan* F_4.
191. [Scene III. Pope+.
192. *ſpeede faire*] *speed, fair* Theob. Warb. Johns. Cap. Steev. Mal.
194. *you*] Ff, Wh. ii. *you,* Rowe ii+, Cap. Wh. i. *your* Qq et cet.

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causeth loue, is all of golde with point full sharpe and bright, That chaseth loue is blunt, whose steele with leaden head is dight.'—Golding's trans.]

181. **golden head**] GREEN (*Emblem Writers*, p. 401) suggests that Shakespeare might have derived this epithet, 'golden,' quite as well from Alciat's 154th and 155th Emblem, ed. 1581, or from Whitney, p. 132, 1586, as from Golding's *Ovid.*

182, 183, 186–189. 'These six lines,' says ROFFE (p. 53), 'have been excellently set by Sir Henry Bishop as a solo, which was sung by Miss Stephens, as Hermia, in the operatised *Midsummer Night's Dream.*'

183. This line is transposed to follow line 181 in SINGER'S second edition. This edition derives its chief value from the contributions to it of W. W. LLOYD. This transposition is probably an emendation by the latter; he proposed it in *Notes and Queries*, 6th ser. vol xi, p. 182, 1878, which he would not have done had it not been his own. HUDSON adopted this transposition, which KEIGHTLEY (*Exp.* 130) says is unnecessary, because the allusion in line 183 is not to the arrows, but 'most probably to the *Cestus* of Venus.'—ED.

184. **Carthage Queene**] For many another noun-compound, see ABBOTT, § 430. STEEVENS: Shakespeare had forgot that Theseus performed his exploits before the Trojan war, and consequently long before the death of Dido.—W. A. WRIGHT: But Shakespeare's Hermia lived in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and was contemporary with Nick Bottom the weaver.

194–197, 204, 205. In Garrick's Version these six lines are sung by Helena. The air by Mr. Christopher Smith. Line 194 reads: 'O Hermia fair, O happy, happy fair,' and the last line: 'You sway the motions of your lover's heart.' In the *List of All the Songs and Passages in Shakspere which have been set to Music*, issued by the *New Shakspere Society*, p. 35, three other compositions adapted to these lines are noted;

Your eyes are loadſtarres, and your tongues ſweet ayre
More tuneable then Larke to ſhepheards eare,
When wheate is greene, when hauthorne buds appeare,
Sickneſſe is catching : O were fauor ſo,
Your words I catch, faire *Hermia* ere I go,

198. *ſo,*] *so I* Theob.+, Cap. Steev. Var.
199. *Your words I*] Qq, Coll. i. *Your words Ide* Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Mal. '90, Sta. *Your worth Ild* Wagner conj. *Your's would I* Han. et cet.

see also ROFFE'S *Handbook*, p. 54. Hermia in turn sings lines 217–220; again the air is by Smith, who has also, set to music, lines 248–253.

194. **you faire**] In the Folio 'you' and 'your' are so frequently confounded (for many examples, see WALKER, *Crit.* ii, 190) that the choice here may well depend on personal preference. Those who prefer 'your fair' of the Qq take 'fair' as a noun (for which there is abundant authority, see ABBOTT, § 5); and take it again as a noun also in 'O happie faire!' For my part, I prefer to take it as a noun only in the latter phrase. 'Demetrius loves you, it is you who are fair. Ah, happy fairness, that can bring such blessings!'—ED.

195. **loadstarres**] JOHNSON: This was a compliment not unfrequent among the old poets. The *lode-star* is the *leading* or *guiding* star, that is, the *pole-star*. The magnet is, for the same reason, called the *lode-stone*, either because it leads iron or because it guides the sailor. Milton has the same thought in *L'Allegro*, 80: 'Where perhaps some beauty lies, The cynosure of neighbouring eyes' [*κυνόσουρα* being the Greek name for the constellation Ursa Minor, in which is the pole-star.—W. A. WRIGHT.] Davies calls Queen Elizabeth: 'Lode-stone to hearts, and lode-stone to all eyes.'—GREY (i, 44): Sir John Maundevile, in his *voiages* and *travailes*, ch. 17, speaking of *Lemery*, saith: 'In that Lond, ne in many othere begonde that, no man may see the Sterre transmontane, that is clept the Sterre of the See, that is unmevable, and that is toward the Northe that we clepen the Lode Sterre.'—HALLIWELL, as an aid to our imaginations, gives us a wood-cut of a six-pointed star.

198. **fauor**] STEEVENS: That is, *feature, countenance*.—HALLIWELL (*Introd.* p. 72, 1841): 'Favour' is not here used, as all editors and commentators have supposed, in the sense of *countenance*, but evidently in the common acceptation of the term—'O, were favour so,' *i. e.* favour in the eyes of Demetrius; a particular application of a wish expressed in general terms.—STAUNTON: Sometimes in Shakespeare it means *countenance, features*, and occasionally, as here, *good graces* generally. [Whether 'favor' refers to the qualities of mind or of person is decided, I think, by the enumeration which follows.—ED.]

199. **Your words I**] KNIGHT, albeit adopting Hanmer's emendation, says that the text of the Folio will give an intelligible meaning if we include in a parenthesis 'Your words I catch, fair Hermia,' adding 'it is in the repetition of the word *fair* that Helena catches the words of Hermia; but she would also catch her voice, her intonation, and her expression as well as her words.'—COLLIER, in his first edition, is the only editor who adopts the text of the Folio, and justifies it; 'the meaning is,' he says, 'that Helena only catches the words and not the voice of Hermia.' In his second edition he followed Hanmer.—The text of the Second Folio, 'Your words I'd catch,' MALONE pronounces 'intelligible,' and STAUNTON, who also adopts it, remarks that 'Helena would catch not only the beauty of her rival's aspect and the melody

My eare ſhould catch your voice, my eye, your eye,
My tongue ſhould catch your tongues ſweet melodie,
Were the world mine, *Demetrius* being bated,
The reſt Ile giue to be to you tranſlated.

203. *Ile*] *ile* Q_1. *I'le* F_3F_4. *I'd* Han. Cam. Wh. ii, Ktly, Huds.

of her tones, but her language also,' which applies quite as well to Hanmer's emendation.—'But,' says W. A. WRIGHT, 'Hanmer's correction gives a better sense.' However reluctant we may be to desert the QqFf, I am afraid we must submit.—ED.

200. **eare . . . voice**] DYCE (ed. ii): Mr W. N. Lettsom would read, 'My *hair* should catch your *hair*, my eye your eye,' and defends the alteration thus: 'As the passage stands at present, Helena wishes her *ear* may resemble the *voice* of Hermia! I conceive that, in the first place, "*heare*"—"*heare*" [a common old spelling of '*hair*'] was transformed into "eare"—"eare" by the blunder of a transcriber. The verse was then operated upon by a sophisticator, who regarded nothing but the line before him, and was not aware of the true meaning of "*my eye your eye*," but took "*catch*" in the ordinary sense, not in the peculiar sense of contracting a disease, which it bears throughout this passage.'—DEIGHTON: If any change were allowable, I should be inclined to read: 'My *fair* should catch your *fair*,' *i. e.* the personal beauty you have ascribed to me should catch your personal beauty, . . . *fair* being the general term including the particulars 'eye' and 'tongue.' 'Voice' seems clearly wrong, . . . and with my conjecture we have in these two lines a complete correspondency with lines 194, 195.—[HUDSON adopted Lettsom's emendation, wherein, I think, the fact is overlooked that, while it is quite possible for Helena's eyes to catch the love-light that lies in Hermia's, and for Helena's tongue to catch the melody of her rival's, by no possibility can Helena's hair be made to resemble Hermia's, short of artificial means. Deighton's emendation is certainly more plausible than Lettsom's. Both of them, however, are, I think, needless. To a compositor, 'eare' might be mistaken for *fair* or *hair*, but it is unlikely that for either of these words he should mis-read or mis-hear 'voice.'—ED.]

200. **my**] ABBOTT, § 237: *Mine* is almost always found before *eye*, *ear*, &c. where no emphasis is intended. But where there is antithesis we have *my*, *thy*. See, also, III, ii, 230: 'To follow *me* and praise *my* eies and face?'

200, 201. **eye . . . melodie**] I cannot believe that to Elizabethan ears the rhyme here was imperfect. It was as perfect as are all the others in this scene. 'Melody,' therefore, must have been pronounced then as it is in German at this day: *melodei*. If additional proof be needed, compare the Fairy's song in II, ii, 15, 16: 'Philomele with melodie, Sing in your sweet Lullaby,' where the music is marred if the rhyme be not perfect.—ED.

202. **bated**] That is, excepted.

203. **Ile**] LETTSOM: Read *I'd*. I cannot but think that the frequent confusion of 'Ile' and 'Ide' is a misprint, not an idiom.—DYCE (ed. ii, where the foregoing note is found): But it certainly appears that our ancestors frequently used '*will*' where we now use 'would,' *e. g.* 'If I *should* pay your worship those again, Perchance you *will* not bear them patiently.'—*Com. of Err.* I, ii, 85; 'I *would* bend under any heavy weight That *he'll* enjoin me to.'—*Much Ado*, V, i, 286.

203. **translated**] That is, transformed, as in Quince's 'Bottom, bless thee; thou art translated,' III, i, 124.

O teach me how you looke, and with what art
you ſway the motion of *Demetrius* hart.
Her. I frowne vpon him, yet he loues me ſtill.
Hel. O that your frownes would teach my ſmiles ſuch skil.
Her. I giue him curſes, yet he giues me loue.
Hel. O that my prayers could ſuch affection mooue.
Her. The more I hate, the more he followes me.
Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth me.
Her. His folly Helena is none of mine.
Hel. None but your beauty, wold that fault wer mine
Her. Take comfort : he no more ſhall ſee my face,
Lyſander and my ſelfe will flie this place.
Before the time I did *Lyſander* ſee,

213. *folly Helena*] *fault, oh Helena* Han. *folly, Helen* Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *fault, fair Helena* Coll. (MS).
none] Q_2Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Coll. (MS). *no fault* Q_1 et cet.
214. *None...wold*'] *None.—But yous beauty;—'would* Henderson ap. Var.
beauty] *beauty's* Daniel, Huds.

213, 214. It is by no means easy to decide between the text as we have it above in the Folio, and the text of Q_1 (which has been adopted by a majority of editors): 'His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.' If we assume that Hermia is trying to comfort her dear friend with assurances of her enduring love, then there is a charm in this asseveration, in the Folio, that she does not share in Demetrius's folly, which gives hate for love, but that she returns love for love; and her words become sympathetic and caressing. But if we adopt the text of Q_1, Hermia's words have a faint tinge of acerbity (which, it must be confessed, is not altogether out of character), as though she were defending herself from some unkind imputation, and wished to close the discussion (which would also be not unnatural). It is again in favour of the Quarto that Helena replies 'would *that* fault were mine.' The demonstrative 'that' seems clearly to refer to a 'fault' previously expressed. This weighs so heavily with Capell that he says the word 'fault' must 'of necessity have a place' in Hermia's line. Lastly, it is in favour of the Folio that Helena's first words are Hermia's last. 'It is *none* of mine,' says Hermia, 'It is *none* of yours,' assents Helena. On the whole, therefore, I adhere to the text of the Folio.—ED.

215, &c. JOHNSON: Perhaps every reader may not discover the propriety of these lines. Hermia is willing to comfort Helena, and to avoid all appearance of triumph over her. She therefore bids her not to consider the power of pleasing as an advantage to be much envied or much desired, since Hermia, whom she considers as possessing it in the supreme degree, has found no other effect of it than the loss of happiness.—DEIGHTON: How powerful must be the graces of my beloved one, seeing that they have made Athens a place of torture to me; *i. e.* since so long as she remained in it she could not marry Lysander. [According to Johnson's interpretation, 'he,' in the phrase 'he hath turn'd,' refers, not to Lysander, but to 'love,' Hermia's own love, which is doubtful.—ED.]

Seem'd Athens like a Paradiſe to mee.
O then, what graces in my Loue do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heauen into hell.
Lyſ. *Helen*, to you our mindes we will vnfold,
To morrow night, when *Phœbe* doth behold
Her ſiluer viſage, in the watry glaſſe,
Decking with liquid pearle, the bladed graſſe
(A time that Louers flights doth ſtill conceale)
Through *Athens* gates, haue we deuis'd to ſteale.
Her. And in the wood, where often you and I,
Vpon faint Primroſe beds, were wont to lye,
Emptying our boſomes, of their counſell ſweld:

218. *like a*] *as a* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. '90, Coll. Dyce, Cam. Wh. ii, Ktly.
219. *do*] *must* Coll. (MS).
220. *into*] Q_2Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Johns. Hal. *vnto a* Q_1, Theob. Warb. Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, Dyce, Sta. Cam. *unto* Var.'03, '13, '21. *into a* White.
226. *gates*] *gate* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
229. *counſell ſweld*] QqFf, Rowe i, Hal. *counſells swell'd* Rowe ii, Pope, Warb. *counſells sweet* Theob. Han. Johns. Ktly. *counsel sweet* Cap. et cet.

220. **into**] DYCE (*Rem.* 44): The context, '*a* heaven,' is quite enough to determine that the reading of Fisher's 4to [Q_1], 'unto *a* hell,' is the right one, excepting that 'unto' should be '*into*.' Compare a well-known passage of Milton: 'The mind is its own place, and in itself Can make *a* heaven of hell, *a* hell of heaven.'—*Par. Lost*, i, 254.

225. **still**] Constantly, always. See Shakespeare *passim*.

228. **faint Primrose beds**] STEEVENS: Whether the epithet 'faint' has reference to the colour or smell of primroses, let the reader determine. [I think it refers to the colour. Twice (in *Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 122, and in *Cym.* IV, ii, 221) Shakespeare speaks of '*pale* primroses.'—DELIUS supposes that 'faint' is here used proleptically, and refers to 'beds for those who are weary. Compare "lazy bed," *Tro. & Cres.* I, iii.'—ED.]

229. **sweld**] THEOBALD: This whole scene is strictly in rhyme, and that it deviates [here and in line 232], I am persuaded is owing to the ignorance of the first, and the inaccuracy of the later, editors; I have, therefore, ventured to restore the rhymes, as, I make no doubt, but the poet first gave them. *Sweet* was easily corrupted into 'sweld,' because that made an antithesis to 'emptying'; and 'strange companions' [line 232] our editors thought was plain English; but *stranger companies* a little quaint and unintelligible. Our author elsewhere uses the substantive *stranger* adjectively, and *companies* to signify 'companions.' See *Rich. II.* I, iii, 143: 'But tread the stranger paths of banishment'; and in *Hen. V.* I, i, 53: 'His companies unletter'd, rude and shallow.' And so in a parallel word: 'My riots past, my wild societies,' *Merry Wives*, III, iv, 8.—HEATH (p. 44): It is evident, as well from the dissonance of the rhyme as from the absurdity and false grammar of the expression, 'bosoms swell'd of their counsels,' that 'swell'd' is corrupt. Mr Theobald hath by a very happy conjecture corrected this wrong reading; [the meaning then is] emptying our bosoms of those secrets upon which we were wont to consult each other with so

There my *Lyſander*, and my ſelfe ſhall meete,
And thence from *Athens* turne away our eyes
To ſeeke new friends and ſtrange companions,
Farwell ſweet play-fellow, pray thou for vs,
And good lucke grant thee thy *Demetrius*.
Keepe word *Lyſander* we muſt ſtarue our ſight,
From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.
Exit Hermia.
Lyſ. I will my *Hermia*. *Helena* adieu,
As you on him, *Demetrius* dotes on you. *Exit Lyſander.*

232. *ſtrange companions*] *ſtranger companies* Theob. Han. Johns. Mal. Steev. Knt, Coll. White, Dyce, Sta. Cam. Ktly.
234. *grant*] *graunt* Q_1.
thy] *thine* Rowe ii.
239. *dotes*] *dote* Qq, Pope et seq.

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sweet a satisfaction. The poet seems to have had in his eye *Psalm* lv, 14: 'We took sweet counsel together.'—STEEVENS adheres to the Folio, because 'a *bosom swell'd with secrets* does not appear as an expression unlikely to have been used by our author who speaks of a *ſtuff'd bosom* in *Macbeth*. In *Rich. II:* IV, i, 298, we have "the unseen grief That swells with silence in the tortured soul." "*Of* counsels swell'd" may mean, swell'd *with* counsels.'—HALLIWELL also defends the Folio, and pronounces Theobald's emendation 'unnecessary' (*Introd.* 73): 'If Shakespeare had written *sweet* and *stranger companies*, it is very improbable that these words could have been so changed either by the actors or printers.' In his Folio edition, fifteen years later than his *Introduction*, Halliwell is still of the same mind: 'Theobald in each instance sacrifices the sense to the ear, the participle "emptying" corroborating the old reading "swell'd," and the comparative, as applied to companions or companies, being pointless.' He then adds: 'In a previous speech of Hermia's all the lines rhyme with the exception of the three commencing ones. If Theobald's theory be correct, the two lines in that speech ending with the words "bow" and "head" should be altered so as to rhyme.'—COLLIER (ed. ii): The (MS) amends 'swell'd' and 'companions' [as Theobald amends them], though, somewhat to our surprise, no change is made in the epithet 'strange.'—DYCE (ed. i): I give here Theobald's emendations, . . . and I give them in the belief that more certain emendations were never made.—W. A. WRIGHT: The rhyme is decisive in favour of Theobald's conjecture. [In a modernised text Theobald's emendations should be adopted unquestionably. See the following note by Walker.—ED.]

232. **strange**] It is noteworthy as a corroboration of Theobald's emendation that WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 53) cites this present word among his many examples of the confusion of final *e* and *er*. See II, ii, 81.

239. **dotes**] A clear instance of the interpolation of the final *s*, early recognised by POPE as an error, and acknowledged by every subsequent editor.—WALKER'S article, dealing with this final *s* (*Crit.* i, 233), is one of the most valuable of his many valuable articles. 'The interpolation of an *s* at the end of a word—generally, but not always, a noun substantive—is remarkably frequent in the Folio. Those who are conversant with the MSS of the Elizabethan Age may perhaps be able to explain its

Hele. How happy ſome, ore otherſome can be?
Through *Athens* I am thought as faire as ſhe.
But what of that? *Demetrius* thinkes not ſo:
He will not know, what all, but he doth know,
And as hee erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes;
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things baſe and vilde, holding no quantity,

243. *he doth*] Ff, Rowe, White. *hee doe* Q_1. *he do* Q_2, Pope et cet.

246. *vilde*] F_2F_3, Knt, Hal. *vile* QqF_4 et cet.

origin. Were it not for the different degree of frequency with which it occurs in different parts of the Folio,—being comparatively rare in the Comedies (except perhaps in *The Winter's Tale*), appearing more frequently in the Histories, and becoming quite common in the Tragedies,—I should be inclined to think it originated in some peculiarity of Shakespeare's hand-writing.' There is another example of it in this play, cited as such by Walker (IV, i, 208, 'every things seemes double'), but which might possibly receive a different explanation. There are several examples in *As You Like It*, cited, in this edition, at I, iii, 60, together with instances from other plays not noticed by Walker; I can recall no single example in *The Tempest*. We know that the Folio was printed at the charges of four Stationers. May not this interpolated *s*, which is local in its frequency, be due, not to Shakespeare's handwriting, but to the compositors in the different printing-offices?—ED.

240. **othersome**] HALLIWELL: A quaint but pretty phrase of frequent occurrence in early works. It is found in the Scripture, *Acts* xvii, 18.—ABBOTT (p. 5) gives an example from Heywood, who, 'after dividing human diners into three classes, thus: "Some with small fare they be not pleased, Some with much fare they be diseased, Some with mean fare be scant appeased," adds, with truly Elizabethan freedom, "But of all *somes* none is displeased To be welcome."'—W. A. WRIGHT refers to *Two Noble Kinsmen*, IV, iii; *Meas. for Meas.* III, ii, 94; also *2 Esdras* xiii, 13. [See also Lily's *Love's Meta.* III, i, p. 232, ed. Fairholt.]

245. **admiring of**] See ABBOTT, § 178, for other examples of verbal nouns.—W. A. WRIGHT: In this construction 'admiring' is a verbal noun, originally governed by a preposition, *in* or *on*, which has disappeared, but which exists sometimes in the degraded form *a*, in such words as 'a hunting,' 'a building.'—VERITY: I take 'admiring' as a present participle, and 'of' as the redundant preposition found in Elizabethan English with many verbs; cf. Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, II, xxiii, 13: 'Neither doth learning *admire* or *esteem of* this architecture.' So, in the same work (II, xxv, 7), 'define of' and 'discern of' (II, xxi, 1).

246, 247. GREEN (*Emblem Writers*, p. 349) finds a parallel to the sentiment in these lines in an emblem, engraved by De Passe in 1596, illustrating the apothegm: 'Perpolit incultum paulatim tempus amorem.' The illustration represents Cupid watching a bear which is licking her cub into shape, and is accompanied by Latin and French stanzas. As the present is, I think, one of the happiest examples of Green's theory, the space is well bestowed in giving these stanzas in full: 'Ursa novum fertur lambendo fingere foetum Paulatim et formam, quae decet, ore dare; Sic dominam, ut valde sic cruda sit aspera Amator Blanditiis sensim mollet et obsequio.' '*Peu à peu.* Ceste masse de chair, que toute ourse faonne [*sic*] En la leschant se forme à son com-

Loue can tranſpoſe to forme and dignity,
Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde,
And therefore is wing'd *Cupid* painted blinde.
Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taſte:
Wings and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haſte.
And therefore is Loue ſaid to be a childe,
Becauſe in choiſe he is often beguil'd,
As waggiſh boyes in game themſelues forſweare;
So the boy Loue is periur'd euery where.
For ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyne,
He hail'd downe oathes that he was onely mine.
And when this Haile ſome heat from *Hermia* felt,
So he diſſolu'd, and ſhowres of oathes did melt,
I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* flight:

251. *figure,*] *figure* Rowe et seq. *haſte*] *haſt* F_4.
253. *is often*] *is oft* Q_2. *often is* Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. White. *is ſo oft* Q_1, Theob. et cet.
254. *in game themſelues*] *themſelues in game* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
256. *eyne*] Q_2 (Ashbee) F_2F_3. *eyen* Q_1Q_2 (Griggs). *eyn* F_4.
257. *onely*] *only* F_2F_4.
258. *this*] *his* Q_2.
259. *So he*] *Lo, he* Cap. *Soon it* Rann. *Soon he* Daniel.

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mencement. Par servir: par flatter, par complaire en aymant, L'amour rude à l'abord, à la fin se façonne.'—ED.

246. **no quantity**] JOHNSON: *Quality* seems a word more suitable to the sense than 'quantity,' but either may serve.—STEEVENS: 'Quantity' is our author's word. So in *Hamlet*, III, ii, 177: 'For women's fear and love hold quantity.'—SCHMIDT: That is, bearing no proportion to what they are estimated by love.

254. **game**] JOHNSON: This signifies here, not contentious play, but *sport, jest*.

256. **eyne**] W. A. WRIGHT: This Old English plural is used by Shakespeare always on account of the rhyme, except in *Lucrece*, 1229, and *Pericles*, III, *Gower*, 5.

259. **So**] ABBOTT, § 66: 'So' (like the Greek οὕτω δή) is often used where we should use *then*.

260. **goe tell**] See ABBOTT, § 349. Also 'go seeke,' II, i, 13.

260, &c. COLERIDGE (p. 101): I am convinced that Shakespeare availed himself of the title of this play in his own mind, and worked upon it as a dream throughout, but especially, and perhaps unpleasingly, in this broad determination of ungrateful treachery in Helena, so undisguisedly avowed to herself, and this, too, after the witty, cool philosophising that precedes. The act itself is natural, and the resolve so to act is, I fear, likewise too true a picture of the lax hold which principles have on a woman's heart, when opposed to, or even separated from, passion and inclination. For women are less hypocrites to their own minds than men are, because in general they feel less proportionate abhorrence of moral evil in and for itself, and more of its outward consequences, as detection and loss of character, than men,—their natures being almost wholly extroitive. Still, however just in itself, the representation of this is not poetical; we shrink from it, and cannot harmonise it with the ideal.

Then to the wood will he, to morrow night
Purſue her ; and for his intelligence,
If I haue thankes, it is a deere expence:
But heerein meane I to enrich my paine,
To haue his ſight thither, and backe againe. *Exit.*

262. *his*] *this* Qq, Rowe et seq.

262. his] This is one of WALKER'S instances (IV, i, 88 is another) where, in this play, *his* and *this* have supplanted one another (*Crit.* ii, 221).

263. deere expence] STEEVENS: That is, it will *cost him much* (be a severe constraint on his feelings,) to make even so slight a return for my communication.—COLLIER (ed. ii): This reading may be reconciled to meaning, but the alteration of the MS at once claims our acceptance; *it is dear recompense* can mean nothing but the expression of great satisfaction on the part of Helena at the reward she hopes to receive for her intelligence.—LETTSOM (*Blackwood*, Aug. 1853): The Old Corrector [*i. e.* Collier's MS] is an old woman who, in this case, has not merely mistaken, but has directly reversed, Shakespeare's meaning. So far from saying that Demetrius's thanks will be any 'recompense' for what she proposes doing, Helena says the very reverse, that they will be a severe aggravation of her pain. 'A dear expense' here means a painful purchase, a bitter bargain. 'If I have thanks, the sacrifice which I make in giving Demetrius this information will be doubly distressing to me.' Of course she would much rather that Demetrius, her old lover, did not thank her for setting him on the traces of his new mistress. Thanks would be a mockery in the circumstances, and this is what Helena means to say. Such is manifestly the meaning of the passage, as may be gathered both from the words themselves and from the connection with the context. The *sight* of Demetrius, and not his *thanks*, was to be Helena's *recompense*.—DYCE (ed. i): The MS Corrector was evidently in total darkness as to the meaning of the passage; nor could Mr Collier himself have paid much attention to the context, when he recommended so foolish an alteration as a singular improvement.—STAUNTON: Does it not mean that, as to gratify her lover with this intelligence, she makes the most painful sacrifice of her feelings, his thanks, even if obtained, are dearly bought?—DELIUS: Helena assuredly means that she purchases even the thanks of Demetrius at a high price, namely, at the price of fostering and furthering Demetrius's love for Hermia, and therefore of her own harm.—W. A. WRIGHT: That is, it will cost me dear, because it will be in return for my procuring him a sight of my rival.

265. In Garrick's Version, Helena, before she departs, sings as follows:—

'Against myself why all this art,
To glad my eyes, I grieve my heart;
To give him joy, I court my bane!
And with his sight enrich my pain.'

The Air is by 'Mr. Burney.'

[*Scene II.*]

Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Ioyner, Bottome the Weauer, Flute the bellowes-mender, Snout the Tinker, and Starueling the Taylor.

Quin. Is all our company heere?

Bot. You were beſt to call them generally, man by man, according to the ſcrip.

Qui. Here is the ſcrowle of euery mans name, which is thought fit through all *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude before the Duke and the Dutches, on his wedding day at night.

[Scene IV. Pope+. Scene III. Fleay. Scene II. Cap. et seq. Scene changes to a Cottage. Theob. A Room in Quince's House. Cap.

1, 2. Snug...Snout] and *Snugge*, the Ioyner, and *Bottom*, the Weauer, and *Flute*, the Bellowes mender, & *Snout*, Q_1.

2. Snout] Snowt F_3F_4, Rowe, Pope.

6. *to*] Om. Q_2.

8. *Enterlude*] *interlude* Theob. et seq.

9. *the Dutches*] *Dutchess* Pope ii, Theob. Warb. Johns. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Sing. Ktly.

1. JOHNSON: In this scene Shakespeare takes advantage of his knowledge of the theatre to ridicule the prejudices and the competitions of the players. Bottom, who is generally acknowledged the principal actor, declares his inclination to be for a tyrant, for a part of fury, tumult, and noise, such as every young man pants to perform when he first steps upon the stage. The same Bottom, who seems bred in a tiring-room, has another histrionical passion. He is for engrossing every part, and would exclude his inferiors from all possibility of distinction. He is therefore desirous to play Pyramus, Thisbe, and the Lion, at the same time.—STAUNTON suggests the possibility that 'in the rude dramatic performance of these handicraftsmen of Athens, Shakespeare was referring to the plays and pageants exhibited by the trading companies of Coventry, which were celebrated down to his own time, and which he might very probably have witnessed.' This is not impossible, especially in view of the fact, which I do not remember to have seen noticed in connection with the present play, that midsummer eve was especially chosen as the occasion for a 'showe' or 'watche,' performed by various companies of handicraftsmen. 'Heare we maye note that ye showe or watche, on midsomer eaue, called "midsomer showe," yearely now vsed within ye Citti of Chester, was vsed in ye tyme of those whitson playes & before,' so says David Rogers, in 1609, *Harl.* MS, 1944, quoted by F. J. FURNIVALL in Appendix to 'Forewords' of *The Digby Mysteries*, p. xxiii, *New Sh. Soc.*—ED.

For remarks on Bottom's character, see Appendix.

5. you were best] For this substitution for the full phrase *to you it were best*, see ABBOTT, § 230.

5. generally] W. A. WRIGHT: This, in Bottom's language, means *particularly, severally.*

6. scrip] GREY (i, 45): Formerly used in the same sense with *script*, and signified a scrip of paper or any manner of writing.

Bot. Firſt, good *Peter Quince*, ſay what the play treats on : then read the names of the Actors : and ſo grow on to a point.

Quin. Marry our play is the moſt lamentable Comedy, and moſt cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisbie*.

Bot. A very good peece of worke I aſſure you, and a

11, 17, 40. Peter] Peeter Q_1.
12, 13. *grow...point*] *grow to a point* Qq, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Sing. Sta. Dyce, Ktly, Cam. *grow on to appoint* F_4. *go on to a point* Warb. *go on to appoint* Coll. MS.
14. *Marry*] *Mary* Q_1.

9. **his wedding**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): This use of 'his' is in conformity to the usage of educated persons in Shakespeare's day.

12, 13. **grow . . . point**] JOHNSON: 'Grow' is used in allusion to his name, Quince.—STEEVENS: It has, I believe, no reference to the name. I meet with the same kind of expression in *Wily Beguiled*, 'As yet we are grown to no conclusion.' [I do not think this is to be found in *Wily Beguiled*.—ED.] Again, in *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584: 'Our reasons will be infinite, I trow, Unless unto some other point we grow' [II, i].—WARNER upholds, as an original emendation, the reading 'appoint' of F_4, and explains: 'Quince first tells them the name of the play, then calls the actors by their names, and after that tells each of them what part is set down for him to act. Perhaps Shakespeare wrote "to *point*," i. e. to appoint.'—HALLIWELL: Warner's suggestion was probably derived from the Opera of *The Fairy Queen*, 1692, where the sentence is thus given:—'and so go on to appoint the parts.' THOMAS WHITE (p. 29): Does not this mean *draw to a conclusion*, alluding to Bottom's trade of a weaver? In a tract in the public library at Cambridge, with the following title—*The Reformado precisely characterised by a modern Churchman*—occurs this passage: 'Here are mechanicks of my profession who can seperate the pieces of salvation from those of damnation, *measure out* the thread, substantially *pressing the points*, till they have fashionably filled up their work with a *well-bottomed* conclusion.' —STAUNTON: That is, and so to business. A common colloquial phrase formerly.—R. G. WHITE: The speech as it stands is good colloquial Bottom-ese.—W. A. WRIGHT: It is not always quite safe to interpret Bottom, but he seems to mean 'come to the point.'

14. **lamentable Comedy**] STEEVENS: This is very probably a burlesque on the title-page of Cambyses, '*A lamentable Tragedie, mixed full of pleasant Mirth, conteyning the life of Cambises, King of Percia*, &c. by Thomas Preston' [1561? It is, I think, very doubtful if any burlesque of a particular play was meant. At any rate, Shakespeare's audiences probably were not so learned that they could at once appreciate the fling at a tragedy in all likelihood thirty years old. Moreover, even in Dryden's time the limits of Tragedy and Comedy were vague. *Cymbeline* is still classed among Tragedies.—ED.]

15. **Pyramus**] See Appendix, *Source of the Plot*.

16. **worke**] KNIGHT: Bottom and Sly both speak of a theatrical representation as they would of a piece of cloth or a pair of shoes. [Perhaps the antithesis may be in calling a 'play' a 'work.' Ben Jonson was the first, I believe, to call his Plays *Works*.—ED.]

merry. Now good *Peter Quince*, call forth your Actors by the ſcrowle. Maſters ſpread your ſelues. 17

Quince. Anſwere as I call you. *Nick Bottome* the Weauer. 20

Bottome. Ready; name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quince. You *Nicke Bottome* are ſet downe for *Pyramus.*

Bot. What is *Pyramus*, a louer, or a tyrant? 25

Quin. A Louer that kills himſelfe moſt gallantly for loue.

Bot. That will aske ſome teares in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience looke to their eies: I will mooue ſtormes; I will condole in ſome meaſure. 30 To the reſt yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could

20. *Weauer.*] *Weauer?* Q_1.
25. Pyramus,] Pyramus? Q_1.
26. *gallantly*] *gallant* Qq, Cap. Coll. Sing. Sta. Ktly, Cam.
29. *it: if*] *it. If* Q_1.
30. *ſtormes*] *stones* Coll. MS.
31. *reſt yet,*] QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Sta. Dyce ii, iii. *rest;—yet*, Theob. et cet. (subs.).
To the reſt] As a stage direction, Opera, 1692, Deighton conj.

20. **Weauer**] In the *Transactions* of *The New Shakspere Soc.* 1877–79, p. 425, G. H. OVEREND describes and transcribes a bill, addressed to Cardinal Wolsey as Chancellor, wherein is contained the 'complaint of one George Maller, a glazier, against Thomas Arthur, a tailor, whom he had undertaken to train as a player.'

26. **gallantly**] COLLIER: This improves the grammar [of the Quartos], but renders the expression less characteristic.—R. G. WHITE (ed. 1): On the contrary, it makes the speech quite unsuited to good Peter Quince, who always speaks correctly. Indeed, it should be observed that purely grammatical blunders are rarely or never put into the mouths of Shakespeare's characters; probably because grammatical forms, in minute points at least, were not so fixed and so universally observed in his day as to make violations of them very ridiculous to a general audience. He depends for burlesque effect upon errors more radically nonsensical and ludicrous.

30. **condole**] W. A. WRIGHT: Bottom, of course, blunders, but it is impossible to say what word he intended to employ. Shakespeare uses 'condole' only once besides, and he then puts it into the mouth of Ancient Pistol, who in such matters is as little of an authority as Bottom. See *Hen. V.* II, i, 133: 'Let us condole the knight,' that is, mourn for him. In *Hamlet*, I, ii, 93, 'condolement' signifies the expression of grief.

31. **rest yet,**] STAUNTON: The colon after 'rest' in modern editions is a deviation which originated perhaps in unconsciousness of one of the senses Shakespeare attributes to the word 'yet.' 'To the rest yet,' is simply, 'To the rest now,' or, as he shortly after repeats it, '*Now*, name the rest of the players.'—W. A. WRIGHT gives two instances of the use of 'yet' in this unemphatic position: Lord Herbert of Cherbury's

play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all ſplit the raging Rocks; and ſhiuering ſhocks ſhall break the locks of priſon gates, and *Phibbus* carre ſhall ſhine from farre, and make and marre the fooliſh Fates. This

32. *Cat*] *Cap* Warb.
in, to] *in. To* Pope, Han. *in and to* Ktly. *in two*, Bottom the Weaver, 1661. *in: To* Theob. et seq. (subs.).
32, 33. *to make all ſplit*] Separate line, Cap.
33–35. *the raging ... Fates*] QqFf, Rowe+, Sta. Eight lines, Johns. et. cet.
33. *ſplit the*] QqFf, Rowe ii, Pope, Han. Sta. *ſplit to* F_4, Rowe i. *split—"the* Theob. et cet. (subs.).
and shiuering] *With shivering* Farmer, Steev.'85, '93.
34. Phibbus] *Phibbus's* Rowe i. *Phibbus'* Theob. ii et seq.

Life, p. 57: 'Before I departed yet I left her with child of a son'; and *Meas. for Meas.* III, ii, 187: 'The duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answered.'

32. **Ercles**] MALONE: In Greene's *Groat's-worth of Wit*, 1592, a player who is introduced says: 'The twelue labors of *Hercules* haue I terribly thundered on the stage.'—HALLIWELL: Henslowe, in his Diary, mentions 'the firste parte of Herculous,' a play acted in 1595, and afterwards, in the same manuscript, the 'two partes of Hercolus' are named as the work of Martin Slather or Slaughter. In Sidney's *Arcadia:* 'leaning his hands vpon his bill, and his chin vpon his hands, with the voyce of one that playeth *Hercules* in a play' [Lib. i, p. 50, ed. 1598].—W. A. WRIGHT: The part of Hercules was like that of Herod in the Mysteries, one in which the actor could indulge to the utmost his passion for ranting.

32. **teare a Cat**] EDWARDS (p. 52): A burlesque upon Hercules's killing a lion. —HEATH (p. 45) takes Warburton's emendation, *cap*, seriously, and supposes 'it might not be unusual for a player, in the violence of his rant, sometimes to tear his cap.'—And CAPELL takes Bottom seriously and supposes 'he might have seen "Ercles" acted, and some strange thing *torn* which he mistook for a cat.'—STEEVENS: In Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, 1611, there is a character called 'Tearcat,' who says: 'I am called by those who have seen my valour, Tearcat' [V, i]. In an anonymous piece, called *Histriomastix*, 1610, a captain says to a company of players: 'Sirrah, this is you would rend and tear the cat upon a stage.' [Act V, p. 73, ed. Simpson, who attributes large portions of the play to Marston, and places the date *circa* 1599, but a few years later, therefore, than the *Mid. N. Dream.*—ED.]

33. **all split**] FARMER: In *The Scornful Lady*, II, iii, by Beau. and Fl. we meet with 'Two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split.' DYCE: The phrase was a favourite expression with our old dramatists.—In his *Few Notes*, p. 61, Dyce observes that he believes 'it has not been remarked' that the expression is properly a 'nautical phrase: "He set downe this period with such a sigh, that, *as the Marriners say*, a man would haue thought *al would haue split againe.*"—Greene's *Neuer too late*, sig. G3, ed. 1611.']—W. A. WRIGHT: Compare with all this, which it illustrates, Hamlet's advice to the players, III, ii, 9, &c: 'to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags,' &c.

33–35. **the raging ... Fates**] THEOBALD: I presume this to be either a quotation from some fustian old play, or a ridicule on some bombastic rants, very near resembling a direct quotation.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Does not Bottom's expression in line 35, 'This *was* lofty,' make it certain that it is a quotation?—STAUNTON: The

was lofty. Now name the reſt of the Players. This is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants vaine: a louer is more condoling.

Quin. *Francis Flute* the Bellowes-mender.

Flu. Heere *Peter Quince.*

Quin. You muſt take *Thisbie* on you.

Flut. What is *Thisbie*, a wandring Knight?

Quin. It is the Lady that *Pyramus* muſt loue.

Flut. Nay faith, let not mee play a woman, I haue a beard comming.

37. Ercles] *Ercles's* Opera, 1692; *Ercles'* Theob. et seq.
vaine...vaine] *veine...veine* Ff. *reign...reign* Bottom the Weaver, 1661.
louer] *lover's* Opera, 1692, Daniel, Huds.
39. *mender.*] *mender?* Q_1.
41. *You*] *Flute, you* Q_2, Cap. Sta. Cam.
42. Flut.] Fla. Q_1.
Thisbie,] Thiſby? Q_2.

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chief humour of Bottom's 'lofty' rant consists in the speaker's barbarous disregard of sense and rhythm; yet, notwithstanding this, and that the whole is printed as prose, carefully punctuated to be unintelligible in all the old copies, modern editors will persist in presenting it in good set doggerel rhyme. [I think Staunton somewhat exaggerates the 'careful' mispunctuation of the old copies; there is but one instance of mispunctuation, namely in 'to make all split the raging rocks,' which, after all, might be due to the compositor, a second Bottom perchance. As W. A. Wright says, it is not always quite safe to interpret Bottom, but I am inclined to think that 'raging' should be pronounced *ragging*, which will better indicate the word *ragged*, which was, *perhaps*, the true word, than 'raging.'—ED.]

39. **Bellowes-mender**] STEEVENS: In Ben Jonson's *Masque of Pan's Anniversary* a man of the same profession is introduced. I have been told that a 'bellows-mender' was one who had the care of organs, regals, &c. [But from the context in Ben Jonson's masque the 'bellows' were of the ordinary, domestic kind.—ED.]

44. **woman**] JOHNSON: This passage shows how the want of women on the old stage was supplied. If they had not a young man who could perform the part, with a face that might pass for feminine, the character was acted in a mask, which was at that time a part of a lady's dress, so much in use that it did not give any unusual appearance to the scene; and he that could modulate his voice in a female tone, might play the woman very successfully. It is observed in Downes's *Roscius Anglicanus* [(p. 26, ed. Davies) of Kynaston that he 'made a compleat Female Stage Beauty; performing his parts so well . . . that it has since been disputable among the judicious, whether any woman that succeeded him so sensibly touched the audience as he']. Some of the catastrophes of the old comedies, which make lovers marry the wrong women, are, by recollection of the common use of masks, brought nearer to possibility.—HALLIWELL: Previously to the Restoration, the parts of women were usually performed by boys or young men. 'In stage playes, for a boy to put one the attyre, the gesture, the passions of a woman; for a meane person to take upon him the title of a Prince with counterfeit porte and traine, is by outwarde signes to shewe

Qui. That's all one, you ſhall play it in a Maske, and you may ſpeake as ſmall as you will. 46

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisbie* too: Ile ſpeake in a monſtrous littl e voyce; *Thiſne, Thiſne*, ah 49

48. *And'*] *An* Pope et seq. (*An'* Johns.).
too] *to* Qq.

49. Thiſne, Thiſne] *Thisby, Thisby* Han. *Listen, listen!* White ii.

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themselves otherwise then they are.'—Gosson's *Playes Confuted in five Actions*, n. d. Occasional instances, however, of women appearing on the London stage occurred early in the seventeenth century. Thus says Coryat, in his *Crudities*, 1611, p. 247, speaking of Venice,—'here I observed certaine things that I never saw before, for I saw women acte, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath beene sometimes used in London; and they performed it with as good a grace, action, gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a player, as ever I saw any masculine actor.' According to Prynne, some women acted at The Blackfriars in the year 1629, and one in the previous year. It appears from the passage in the text, and from what follows, that the actor's beard was concealed by a mask, when it was sufficiently prominent to render the personification incongruous; but a story is told of Davenant stating as a reason why the play did not commence, that they were engaged in 'shaving the Queen.' The appearance of female actors was certainly of very rare occurrence previously to the accession of Charles II. The following is a clause in the patent granted to Sir W. Davenant:—'That, the women's parts in plays have hitherto been acted by men in the habits of women, at which some have taken offence, we do permit, and give leave, for the time to come, that all women's parts be acted by women.' Langbaine in his *Account of the English Dramatic Poets*, 1691, p. 117, speaking of Davenport's King John and Matilda, observes that the publisher, Andrew Pennycuicke, acted the part of Matilda, 'women in those times not having appear'd on the stage.' Hart and Clun, according to the *Historia Histrionica*, 1699, 'were bred up boys at The Blackfriars, and acted women's parts;' and the same authority informs us that Stephen Hammerton 'was at first a most noted and beautifull woman-actor.' An actor named Pate played a woman's part in the Opera of *The Fairy Queen*, 1692. [According to Malone (Var. '21, iii, 126), it is the received tradition that Mrs Saunderson, who afterwards married Betterton, was the first English actress. Unmarried women were not styled 'Miss' until towards the close of the seventeenth century. For a discussion of the earliest appearance of actresses on the English stage, see notes on pp. 288, 289 of *As You Like It*, and p. 397 of *Othello*, in this edition.—ED.]

47. **small**] HALLIWELL: That is, low, soft, feminine. Slender, describing Anne Page (*Mer. Wives*, I, i, 49), observes that 'she has brown hair and speaks small like a woman.' The expression is an ancient one, an example of it occurring in Chaucer, *The Flower and the Leaf*, line 180, 'With voices sweet entuned and so smalle.' [Many other examples are given by Halliwell, dating from 1552 to 1638, but the phrase in the present passage is amply explained by Bottom's 'monstrous little voice,' if any explanation be at all required.—ED.]

49. **Thisne, Thisne**] W. A. WRIGHT: These words are printed in italic in the old copies, as if they represented a proper name, and so 'Thisne' has been regarded as a blunder of Bottom's for Thisbe. But as he has the name right in the very next

Pyramus my louer deare, thy *Thisbie* deare, and Lady deare.

Quin. No no, you muſt play *Pyramus*, and *Flute*, you *Thisby*.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Qu. *Robin Starueling* the Taylor.

Star. Heere *Peter Quince*.

Quince. *Robin Starueling*, you muſt play *Thisbies* mother?

Tom Snowt, the Tinker.

Snowt. Heere *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You, *Pyramus* father; my ſelf, *This bies* father; *Snugge* the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: and I hope there is a play fitted.

52, 53. *you* Thisby] *your Thisby* Rowe i.
55. *Taylor.*] *Tailer?* Q_1.
58. *mother?*] *mother:* Qq.
59 closes line 58, Qq, Cap. et seq.
Tinker.] *Tinker?* Q_1.
60. Peter] Peeer F_2.
62. *and I hope*] *I hope* Rowe ii+.
there] *here* Qq, Cap. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Sing. Hal. Sta. Dyce, Cam. White ii.

line, it seems more probable that 'Thisne' signifies *in this way;* and he then gives a specimen of how he would aggravate his voice. *Thissen* is given in Wright's *Provincial Dictionary* as equivalent to *in this manner;* and *thissens* is so used in Norfolk.—R. G. WHITE (ed. ii) says that Bottom did not use 'in this way such words as *thissen*.'—VERITY: Probably a mistake for 'Thisbe,'—but whose? Most likely not the printer's (contrast the next line). And if Bottom's, why does he make it only here? Perhaps the reason is that the name is the first word that he has to utter in this his first attempt to speak in a 'monstrous little voice.' For an instant, may be, it plays him false, then by the next line he has recovered himself. [W. A. Wright's note carries conviction. It is not impossible that Capell also thus interpreted the words, which he prints in Roman, with a dash before and after, whereas proper names he invariably prints in Italics. In Mrs Centlivre's *Platonick Lady*, IV, i, 1707, Mrs Dowdy 'enters drest extravagantly in French Night cloaths and Furbelows,' and says: 'If old Roger Dowdy were alive and zeen me thisen, he wou'd zwear I was going to fly away.'—ED.]

58. **mother**] THEOBALD: There seems a double forgetfulness of our poet in relation to the Characters of this Interlude. The father and mother of Thisbe, and the father of Pyramus, are here mentioned, who do not appear at all in the Interlude; but 'Wall' and 'Moonshine' are both employed in it, of whom there is not the least notice taken here.—CAPELL: What the moderns call a forgetfulness in the poet was, in truth, his judgement: [these parts] promised little, and had been too long in expectance; whereas Quince's 'Prologue' and the other actors, 'Moon-shine' and 'Wall,' elevate and surprise.—STEEVENS: The introduction of Wall and Moonshine was an afterthought; see III, i, 59 and 67.

Snug. Haue you the Lions part written? pray you if be, giue it me, for I am ſlow of ſtudie.

Quin. You may doe it *extemporie*, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let mee play the Lyon too, I will roare that I will doe any mans heart good to heare me. I will roare, that I will make the Duke ſay, Let him roare againe, let him roare againe.

Quin. If you ſhould doe it too terribly, you would fright the Dutcheſſe and the Ladies, that they would ſhrike, and that were enough to hang vs all.

All. That would hang vs euery mothers ſonne.

Bottome. I graunt you friends, if that you ſhould fright the Ladies out of their Wittes, they would haue no more diſcretion but to hang vs: but I will aggrauate my voyce ſo, that I will roare you as gently as any ſucking Doue; I will roare and 'twere any Nightingale.

64. *if*] *if it* QqFf.
72. *If*] *And* Q_1. *An* Cap. et seq.
76. *friends*] *friend* F_4, Rowe i.
if that] *if* Qq, Pope+, Cap. Cam.
80. *roare*] *roare you* Qq, Pope+, Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Hal. Sta. Dyce, Cam.
and] *an* Rowe ii et seq.

65. **studie**] STEEVENS: 'Study' is still the cant term used in a theatre for getting any nonsense by heart. Hamlet asks the player if he can 'study a speech.'—MALONE: Steevens wrote this note to vex Garrick, with whom he had quarreled. 'Study' is no more a 'cant term' than any other word of art, nor is it applied necessarily to 'nonsense.'

71. **againe**] COWDEN-CLARKE: Not only does Bottom propose to play every part himself, but he anticipates the applause, and encores his own roar.

78. **aggrauate**] W. A. WRIGHT: Bottom, of course, means the very opposite, like Mrs Quickly, in *2 Hen. IV:* II, iv, 175: 'I beseek you now, aggravate your choler.'

80. **sucking Doue**] W. A. WRIGHT: Oddly enough, Bottom's blunder of 'sucking dove' for 'sucking lamb' has crept into Mrs Clarke's *Concordance*, where *2 Hen. VI:* III, i, 71 is quoted, 'As is the sucking dove or,' &c.—BAILEY (*Received Text*, &c. ii, 198): 'Sucking dove' is so utterly nonsenical that it is marvellous how it has escaped criticism and condemnation. So far from suffering such a fate, it continues to be quoted as if it were some felicitous phrase. The plea can scarcely be set up that it is humorous, for the humour of the passage lies in Bottom's undertaking to roar gently and musically, although acting the part of a lion, and is not at all dependent on the incongruity of representing a dove as sucking. The blunder, which is whimsical enough, may be rectified by the smallest of alterations—by striking out a single letter from 'dove,' leaving the clause 'as gently as any sucking *doe*.' [Had Bailey no judicious friend?—ED.]

80. **and 'twere**] STEEVENS: As if it were. Compare *Tro. & Cres.* I, ii, 188:

Quin. You can play no part but *Piramus*, for *Piramus* is a ſweet-fac'd man, a proper man as one ſhall ſee in a ſummers day; a moſt louely Gentleman-like man, therfore you muſt needs play *Piramus*.

Bot. Well, I will vndertake it. What beard were I beſt to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will diſcharge it, in either your ſtraw-colour beard, your orange tawnie beard, your purple in graine

84. *Gentleman-like man*] *Gentleman-like-man* F_3F_4, Rowe.

'He will weep you, an 'twere a man born in April.' [For many examples where *an* and *and* have been confounded, see WALKER, *Crit.* ii, 153, or ABBOTT, § 104.]

89. **straw-colour beard**] HALLIWELL: The custom of dyeing beards is frequently referred to. 'I have fitted my divine and canonist, dyed their beards and all.'—*Silent Woman*. Sometimes the beards were named after Scriptural personages, the colours being probably attributed as they were seen in old tapestries. 'I ever thought by his red beard he would prove a Judas.'—*Insatiate Countess*, 1613. 'That Abraham-coloured Trojon' is mentioned in *Soliman and Perseda*, 1599; and 'a goodly, long, thick Abraham-colour'd beard' in *Blurt, Master Constable*, 1602. Steevens has conjectured that *Abraham* may be a corruption of *auburn*. A 'whay-coloured beard' and 'a kane-coloured beard' are mentioned in the *Merry Wives*, 1602, the latter being conjectured by some to signify a beard of the colour of cane, which would be nearly synonymous with the straw-coloured beard alluded to by Bottom.

90. **purple in graine**] MARSH (*Lectures*, &c. p. 67): The Latin *granum* signifies a seed, and was early applied to all small objects resembling seeds, and finally to all minute particles. A species of oak or ilex (*Quercus coccifera*) is frequented by an insect of the genus *coccus*, which, when dried, furnishes a variety of red dyes, and which, from its seed-like form, was called in Later Latin *granum*, in Spanish, *grana*, and *graine* in French; from one of these is derived the English word *grain*, which, as a coloring material, strictly taken, means the dye produced by the coccus insect, often called in the arts *kermes;* this dye (like the murex of Tyre) is capable of assuming a variety of reddish hues, whence Milton and other poets often use *grain* as equivalent to *Tyrean purple*, as in *Il Penseroso:* 'All in a robe of darkest grain.' [Marsh here gives many instances from Milton, Chaucer, and others showing that, in the use of the word *grain*, color is denoted.] The phrase 'purple-in-grain' in Bottom's speech signifies a color obtained from kermes, and doubtless refers to a hair-dye of that material. The color obtained from kermes or grain was peculiarly durable, that is, *fast*, which word in this sense is etymologically the same as *fixed*. When, then, a merchant recommended his purple stuffs as being dyed in *grain*, he originally meant that they were dyed with *kermes*, and would wear well, and this phrase was afterwards applied to other colors as expressing their durability. Thus, in *The Com. of Err.* III, ii, 107, when Antipholus says, 'That's a fault that water will mend,' 'No, sir,' Dromio replies, ''tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.' And again in

beard, or your French-crowne colour'd beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. Some of your French Crownes haue no haire at all, and then you will play bare-fac'd. But maſters here are your parts, and I am to intreat you, requeſt you, and deſire you, to con them by too morrow night : and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the Towne, by Moone-light, there we will rehearſe : for if we meete in the Citie, we ſhalbe dog'd with company, and our deuiſes knowne. In the meane time, I wil draw a bil of pro-

91. *colour'd*] *colour* Qq, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Sing. Hal. Sta. Dyce, Cam. White ii.
91, 103. *perfect*] *perfit* Qq.
96. *too morrow*] Q_2.
98. *we will*] *will wee* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Hal. Sta. Dyce, Cam. White ii.

Twelfth Night, I, v, 253, when Viola insinuates that Olivia's complexion had been improved by art, the latter replies, ''Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.' In both these examples it is the sense of permanence, a well-known quality of the color produced by *grain* or *kermes*, that is expressed. It is familiarly known that if wool be dyed before spinning, the color is usually more permanent than when the spun yarn or manufactured cloth is first dipped in the tincture. When the original sense of *grain* grew less familiar, and it was used chiefly as expressive of *fastness* of color, the name of the effect was transferred to an ordinary known cause, and *dyed in grain*, originally meaning dyed with kermes, then dyed with fast color, came at last to signify dyed in *the wool*, or raw material. The verb *ingrain*, meaning to incorporate a color or quality with the natural substance, comes from *grain* used in this last sense. *Kermes* is the Arabic and Persian name of the coccus insect, and occurs in a still older form, *krmi*, in Sanscrit. Hence come the words *carmine* and *crimson*. The Romans sometimes applied to the coccus the generic name *vermiculus*, a little worm or insect, the diminutive of *vermis*, which is doubtless cognate with the Sanscrit *krmi*, and from which comes *vermilion*, erroneously supposed to be produced by the kermes, and it may be added that *cochineal*, as the name both of the dye, which has now largely superseded *grain*, and of the insect which produces it, is derived, through the Spanish, from *coccum*, the Latin name of the Spanish insect.

91. **French-crowne colour'd**] It is manifest that this means the yellowish color of a gold coin. In Quince's reply there is a reference to the baldness which resulted from an illness supposed to be more prevalent in France than elsewhere.

97. **a mile**] See note on 'league,' in I, i, 175.

97. **without**] See IV, i, 171, 'where we might be Without the perill of the Athenian Law,' where 'without' is used locatively, as here.—ED.

100. **properties**] From 1511, when the Church-wardens of Bassingborne, for a performance of the play of *Saint George*, disbursed 'xx, s' 'To the garnement-man for garnements and *propyrts*' (Warton's *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, iii, 326, cited by Steevens), to the present day, the 'properties' are the stage requisites of costume or furniture. In Henslowe's *Diary* (p. 273, *Sh. Soc.*) there is an 'Enventary tacken of all the properties for my Lord Admiralles men, the 10 of Marche 1598,'

perties, ſuch as our play wants. I pray you faile me not. 101

Bottom. We will meete, and there we may rehearſe more obſcenely and couragiouſly. Take paines, be perfect, adieu.

Quin. At the Dukes oake we meete. 105

103. *more*] *moſt* Q_1, Cap. Sta. Cam. White ii.
103–105. *Take paines...meete*] Given to Quince, Coll. ii, iii (MS), Sing. Dyce ii, iii, Ktly, Huds.
103. *paines*] *paine* Ff, Rowe.

wherein we find such items as 'j rocke, j cage, j tombe, j Hell mought (*i. e.* mouth).' Again, 'Item, ij marchpanes, & the sittie of Rome.' 'Item, j wooden canepie; owld Mahemetes head,' &c. Halliwell, *ad loc.* and Collier's *Eng. Dram. Poetry*, iii, 159, give abundant references to the use of the word.—ED.

103. **obscenely**] GREY (i, 47): I should have imagined that Shakespeare wrote 'more obscurely,' had I not met with the following distinction in Randolph's *Muses Looking-Glass*, IV, ii (p. 244, ed. Hazlitt): '*Kataplectus.* Obscenum est, quod intra scænam agi non opportuit.' [The point is scarcely worth noting, but I think that 'scænam' is here used not as 'on the stage,' but merely as 'in public,' and the whole phrase is only an ordinary definition of 'obscenum.'—SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) gives a misuse of 'obscenely' by Costard similar to Bottom's: 'When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely, as it were, so fit.'—*Love's Lab. L.* IV, i, 145; from which example DEIGHTON infers that Bottom meant 'more *seemly*.'—ED.]

103, 105. **Take paines ... meete**] COLLIER (*Notes*, p. 100): These words are given to Quince by the Old Corrector, and they seem to belong to him, as the manager of the play, rather than to Bottom. [This plausible suggestion was adopted by Dyce and Hudson with due acknowledgement, by Singer and Keightley without acknowledgement: the latter is excusable because he printed from Singer, and more than once expressed his regret that he had followed Singer's text without more careful thought, but Singer has less excuse. I know of no editor who more freely made use, without acknowledgement, of his fellow editors' notes, than Singer, and no one was more bitter than he in denunciation of what he assumed to be Collier's literary dishonesty. Plausible though this present emendation be, it is doubtful if an assumption of the manager's duty be not characteristic of Bottom.—ED.]

105. **Dukes oake**] HALLIWELL: The conjecture is, perhaps, a whimsical one, but the localities here mentioned, 'the Palace Wood' and the 'Duke's Oak,' bear some appearance of being derived from English sources, and, in a certain degree, support an opinion that they were either taken from an older drama, or were names familiar to Shakespeare as belonging to real places in some part of his own country.

105. Garrick thus ended the scene:—

Bot. But hold ye, hold ye, neighbours; are your voices in order, and your tunes ready? For if we miss our musical pitch, we shall be all sham'd and abandon'd.

Quin. Ay, ay! Nothing goes down so well as a little of your sol, fa, and long quaver; therefore let us be in our airs—and for better assurance I have got the pitch pipe.

Bot. Stand round, stand round! We'll rehearse our eplog—Clear up your pipes, and every man in his turn take up his stanza-verse,—Are you all ready?

All. Ay, ay!—Sound the pitch-pipe, Peter Quince. [Quince *blows.*

Bot. Now make your reverency and begin.

Bot. Enough, hold or cut bow-ſtrings. *Exeunt* 106

106. *cut*] *break* or *not* Han. conj. MS ap. Cam.

Song—*for Epilogue.*

By Quince, Bottom, Snug, Flute, Starveling, Snout.

Quin. Most noble Duke, to us be kind;
Be you and all your courtiers blind,
That you may not our errors find,
But smile upon our sport.
For we are simple actors all,
Some fat, some lean, some short, some tall;
Our pride is great, our merit small;
Will that, pray, do at court?

Starv. The writer too of this same piece,
Like other poets here of Greece,
May think all swans, that are but geese,
And spoil your princely sport.
Six honest folk we are, no doubt,
But scarce know what we've been about,
And tho' we're honest, if we're out,
That will not do at court.

[Bottom and Flute in turn continue the song, but the foregoing is as much as need be here repeated.]

Bot. Well said, my boys, my hearts! Sing but like nightingales thus when you come to your misrepresentation, and we are made forever, you rogues! So! steal away now to your homes without inspection, meet me at the Duke's oak—by moonlight—mum's the word.

All. Mum! [*Exeunt all stealing out.*

106. **hold or cut bow-strings**] CAPELL (*Notes*, p. 102): This phrase is of the proverbial kind, and was born in the days of archery: when a party was made at butts, assurance of meeting was given in the words of that phrase; the sense of the person using them being that he would 'hold' or keep promise, or they might '*cut* his *bow-strings*,' demolish him for an archer.—STEEVENS: In *The Ball*, by Chapman and Shirley, 1639: '*Scutilla.* Have you devices To jeer the rest? *Lucina.* All the regiment of them, or I'll break my bowstrings.'—[II, iii]. The 'bowstring' in this instance may mean only the *strings* which make part of the bow of a musical instrument. [It is quite possible, but there is nothing in the context of the play to lead us to the inference. A 'kit' is mentioned in the preceding act.]—MALONE: To meet, *whether bowstrings hold or are cut*, is to meet in all events. 'He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bowstring,' says Don Pedro, in *Much Ado*, III, ii, 10, 'and the little hangman dare not shoot at him.'—STAUNTON and W. A. WRIGHT approve of Capell's explanation; DYCE is unable to determine whether it be true or not.

Actus Secundus. [*Scene I.*]

Enter a Fairie at one doore, and Robin good-fellow at another.

Rob. How now ſpirit, whether wander you?

Fai. Ouer hil, ouer dale, through buſh, through briar, 5
Ouer parke, ouer pale, through flood, through fire,
I do wander euerie where, ſwifter then ỹ Moons ſphere; 7

1. Om. Qq.
[Scene I. Rowe et seq. Scene, a Wood. Theob. A Wood near *Athens.* Cap.
2. Enter...doore] Enter, from opposite sides, a Fairy, Cap.
Fairie] fairy Q_2.
and] and Puck, or Rowe.
3. at another.] Om. Cap.
4. Rob.] Puck. Rowe et seq.
4. *whether*] Q_2F_3.
5–9. *Ouer...*(*green*] Eight lines, Pope et seq.
5, 6. *through*] *thorough* Q_1, Cap. et seq.
7. *then*] *than* Q_1.
Moons] *moones* Steev. Mal. Var. White ii. *moony* Steev. conj. White i Huds. *moone's* Ktly.

2, 4, 17, &c. **Robin**] See FLEAY, V, i, 417.

2. **doore**] DYCE (*Rem.* p. 45): The 'doors' refer to the actual stage-locality, not to the scene supposed to be represented. . . . More than one editor of early dramas has mistaken the meaning of *door* in the stage-directions. According to the old copies of Beau. and Fl.'s *Wit without Money*, III, iv, Luce enters, and 'lays a suit and letter *at the door*' (i. e. at the stage-door, at the side of the stage); according to Weber's ed. she 'lays a suit and letter *at a house door*'!!

4. To read this line rhythmically we must, according to Walker (see note, line 32 of this scene, and *Vers.* 103) and Abbott (§ 466), contract 'spirit' into *sprite*, and 'whither' into *whi'er*, thus: 'Hów now | sprite, whi'er | wánder | yóu.' I am not sure, however, that the ear is not quite as well satisfied with the line as it stands.—ED.

5, 6. According to GUEST (i, 172), the sameness of rhythm in these lines calls up in the mind the idea of 'a *multitudinous* succession.'—COLERIDGE, as quoted by Collier, said that 'the measure had been invented and employed by Shakespeare for the sake of its appropriateness to the rapid and airy motion of the Fairy by whom the passage is delivered.' In line 110 of this scene we again have 'through,' where, as here, the First Quarto has 'thorough,' and is followed by every editor. 'Thorough' is merely a mode of spelling of the Early English *thurh*, to indicate the pronunciation of *r* final, which ABBOTT, § 478, calls 'a kind of "burr."' Drayton imitated these lines in his *Nymphidia*, 1627.

7. **Moons**] STEEVENS: Unless we suppose this to be the Saxon genitive case, *moones*, the metre will be defective. So in Spenser, *Fairie Queene*, III, i, 15: 'And eke through fear as white as whales bone.' Again, in a letter from Gabriel Harvey to Spenser, 1580: 'Have we not *God hys wrath* for God*des* wrath, and a thousand of the same stampe, wherein the corrupte orthography in the most, hath been the sole or principal cause of corrupte prosodye in over-many?' The following passage,

[7. Moons sphere;]

however, in Sidney's *Arcadia* [Lib. III, p. 262, 1598] may suggest a different reading: 'Diana did begin. What mov'd me to invite Your presence (sister deare) first to my Moony spheare.'—COLLIER: It has been usual to print 'moons' as two syllables, as if it were to be pronounced like 'whales' in *Love's Lab. Lost*, V, ii, 332, 'To show his teeth as white as whale's bone,' but all that seems required for the measure is to dwell a little longer than usual upon the monosyllable 'moons.'—With Collier, ABBOTT agrees, and in § 484 gives a long list of examples where 'monosyllables containing diphthongs and long vowels are so emphasized as to dispense with an unaccented syllable;' among them is the present line, as well as line 58, 'But *room* Fairy, heere comes Oberon.'—R. G. WHITE (ed. i) and HUDSON adopt 'moony sphere' on the ground not only that it is a common poetical phrase, but that it is certain Shakespeare would not have allowed, among lines of exquisite music, a line so unrhythmical as this as it stands in the Folio.—W. A. WRIGHT: 'Moon's' is a disyllable, as 'Earth's' in *The Tempest*, IV, i, 110: 'Earth's increase, foison plenty.' Compare, also, IV, i, 107, of the present play, where the true reading is that of the First Quarto: 'Trip we after night's shade.' The Second Quarto and the Folios read 'the night's,' but this disturbs the accent of the verse.—Finally, we have GUEST, whose rhythmical solution differs from all others, and is to me the true one. 'Steevens,' says GUEST (i, 294), 'with that mischievous ingenuity which called down the happy ridicule of Gifford, thought fit to *improve* the metre of Shakespeare [by reading *moones*. But the Qq and Ff are] against him. The flow of Shakespeare's line is quite in keeping with the peculiar rhythm which he has devoted to his fairies. It wants nothing from the critic but his forbearance. Burns, in his *Lucy*, has used this section [viz. 5. *p.* of two accents] often enough to give a peculiar charm to his metre:

"O wat ye wha's : in yon || town | ,
Ye see the e'enin sun upon?
The fairest dame's : in yon || town | ,
The e'enin sun is shining on."

Moore also, in one of his beautiful melodies, has used a compound stanza, which opens with a stave, like Burns's:

"While gazing on : the moon's || light | ,
A moment from her smile I turn'd
To look at orbs : that, more || bright, |
In lone and distant glory burn'd."'

To those who are familiar with Guest's volumes the concise formula '5. *p.*' needs no explanation, but to others it may be as well to explain, in fewest possible words, that it designates a section of a verse composed of two iambs, where a pause takes the place of the second unaccented syllable. As an illustration of '5.' alone, without the '*p.*', take the first section of the line, 'I'll loòk | tŏ lĭke : if looking liking move'; or take the second section in one of the lines before us: 'I do wan : dĕr èv' | rў whère.' If now '*p.*' be added to '5.', we have the scansion of the line under discussion, as well as the lines from Burns and Moore: 'Swifter than : thĕ moòns || ⏑ sphère'; 'While gazing on : thĕ moòn's || ⏑ light, | &c. In the line in *The Tempest*, IV, i, 110 (IV, i, 122 of this ed.; which see, with the notes), this same rule could be applied, were it not that there is authority in the Folios for the insertion of a syllable: 'Earth's increàse : ⏑ fol | zŏn plĕn | ty.' The $F_2F_3F_4$ inserted 'and,' 'Earth's

And I ſerue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbs vpon the 8
The Cowſlips tall, her penſioners bee, (green.

8. *orbs*] *herbs* Grey. *cups* Wilson. 9. *tall*] *all* Coll. MS.

increase and foizon plenty,' an addition which is as harmless as it is needless. It is important, I think, to emphasise this use of these *moræ vacuæ*, or, as Guest calls them, 'the pauses filling the place of an unaccented syllable,' so familiar to us in Greek and Latin, especially in Plautus; a neglect of them is a serious defect, I think, in much of the scansion of Shakespeare's verse.—ED.

7. **sphere**] FURNIVALL (*New Sh. Soc. Trans.* 1877–79, p. 431): At the date of this play the Ptolemaic system was believed in, and the moon and all the planets and stars were supposed to be fixed in hollow crystalline spheres or globes. These spheres were supposed to be swung bodily round the earth in twenty-four hours by the top sphere, the *primum mobile*, thus making an entire revolution in one day and night. [Furnivall reprints from Batman on Bartholomeus *de Proprietatibus Rerum*, the following sections: 'What is the World'; 'Of the distinction of heauen'; 'Of heauen Emperio'; 'Of the sphere of heauen'; 'Of double mouing of the Planets'; 'Of the Sunne'; 'Of the Moone'; Of the starre Comets'; and 'Of fixed Starres.' For the 'music of the spheres,' see notes, *Mer. of Ven.* V, i, 74, of this edition.—ED.]

8. **dew her orbs**] JOHNSON: The 'orbs' are circles supposed to be made by the fairies on the ground, whose verdure proceeds from the fairies' care to water them. Thus, Drayton [*Nymphidia*, p. 162, ed. 1748]: 'And in their courses make that round, In meadows and in marshes found, Of them so call'd the Fairy ground.'—STEEVENS: Thus, in Olaus Magnus *de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*: '—similes illis spectris, quæ in multis locis, præsertim nocturno tempore, suum saltatorium orbem cum omnium musarum concentu versare solent.' It appears from the same author that these dancers always parched up the grass, and therefore it is properly made the office of the fairy to refresh it.—DOUCE (i, 180): When the damsels of old gathered the May dew on the grass, and which they made use of to improve their complexions, they left undisturbed such of it as they perceived on the fairy rings; apprehensive that the fairies should in revenge destroy their beauty. Nor was it reckoned safe to put the foot within the rings, lest they should be liable to the fairies' power.—HALLIWELL: These 'orbs' are the well-known circles of dark-green grass, frequently seen in old pasture-fields, generally called 'fairy-rings,' and supposed to be created by the growth of a species of fungus, *Agaricus orcades*, Linn. These circles are usually from four to eight feet broad, and from six to twelve feet in diameter, and are more prominently marked in summer than in winter.—BELL (*Puck*, &c. iii, 193): The intention seems rather to point to gathering the dew for the queen to wash her face in; a powerful means of continual youth. [See Brand's *Popular Antiq.* ii, 480, ed. Bohn; or Dyer, *Folk-lore of Sh.* p. 15; see also *The Tempest*, V, i, 44, of this ed.—CAPELL gives what he terms 'a reverie of long standing' as to the origin of these fairy-rings: in substance it is that if air from the earth rises into the vapours hanging over a meadow a bubble must be the consequence, and when the bubble breaks the matter of which it was composed is deposited in a circular form; and as this matter is prolific, the grass of these circles is more verdant than elsewhere. Evidently Banquo had convinced Capell that the earth hath bubbles as the water hath. The latest explanation of these 'fairy-rings' is contained in an Address delivered by J. SIDNEY TURNER at the Fiftieth Annual Meeting of the South-Eastern Branch of the Brit. Med. Assoc., and

In their gold coats, ſpots you ſee, 10
Thoſe be Rubies, Fairie fauors,

10. *coats*] *cups* Coll. MS.

reported in the *Brit. Med. Journ.* 28 July, '94, wherein it is noted that the 'so-called "fairy-rings" on hills and downs were produced by the better and more vigorous growth of the grass, owing to the excess of nitrogen afforded by the fungi, which composed the ring of the previous year.'—ED.]

9. **Cowslips . . . pensioners**] JOHNSON: The cowslip was a favorite among the fairies. Thus, Drayton, *Nymphidia:* 'And for the Queen a fitting bower, Quoth he, is that fair cowslip-flower, On Hipcut-hill that groweth; In all your train there's not a fay That ever went to gather May, But she hath made it in her way The tallest there that groweth.'—T. WARTON: This was said in consequence of Queen Elizabeth's fashionable establishment of a band of military courtiers, by the name of *pensioners*. They were some of the handsomest and *tallest* young men, of the best families and fortune that could be found. Hence, says Mrs Quickly, *Merry Wives*, II, ii, 79, 'and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners.' They gave the mode in dress and diversions.—KNIGHT: They were the handsomest men of the first families,—tall, as the cowslip was to the fairy, and shining in their spotted gold coats like that flower under an April sun.—HALLIWELL: Holles, in his life of the first Earl of Clare, says: 'I have heard the Earl of Clare say, that when he was pensioner to the Queen, he did not know a worse man of the whole band than himself; and that all the world knew he had then an inheritance of 4000*l.* a year.' 'In the month of December,' 1539, says Stowe, *Annals*, p. 973, ed. 1615, 'were appointed to waite on the king's person fifty gentlemen, called *Pensioners* or *Speares*, like as they were in the first yeare of the king; unto whom was assigned the summe of fiftie pounds, yerely, for the maintenance of themselves, and everie man two horses, or one horse and a gelding of service.'—W. A. WRIGHT: See Osborne's *Traditional Memoirs of Queene Elizabeth* (in *Secret History of the Court of James the First*, i, 55). When Queen Elizabeth visited Cambridge in 1564, she was present at a performance of the *Aulularia* of Plautus in the ante-chapel of King's College, on which occasion her gentlemen pensioners kept the stage, holding staff torches in their hands (Cooper's *Annals of Cambridge*, ii, 193).—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 47): The passage in Milton's *Penseroso*, l. 6, alludes to the pensioners' dress: '—*gaudy shapes*—As thick and numberless As the *gay* motes that people the sunbeams, Or likest hovering dreams, The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.' In those times pensioners, like pursuivants, progresses, &c., were still things familiar, and naturally suggested themselves as subjects for simile or metaphor. [In 1598 Paul Hentzner saw these pensioners guarding the queen on each side; they were still 'fifty in number, with gilt halberds.' See Rye's *England as seen by Foreigners*, p. 105.]

10. **spots**] PERCY: There is an allusion in *Cymbeline* to the same red spots, 'A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops I' th' bottom of a cowslip.'—HALLIWELL: Parkinson, speaking of this species of cowslip (the *Primula veris*, the common cowslip of the fields), mentions its 'faire yellow flowers, with spots of a deeper yellow at the bottome of each leafe.'—*Paradisus Terrestris*, 1629, p. 244. Collier's MS Corrector, in altering 'coats' to *cups* was probably thinking of one of the names of the crowfoot, which was *golde cup*; but the flowers of the cowslip are not, strictly speaking, cups.

In thoſe freckles, liue their ſauors,
I muſt go ſeeke ſome dew drops heere,
And hang a pearle in euery cowſlips eare.
Farewell thou Lob of ſpirits, Ile be gon,

13. *heere*] *here and there* Han. Cap. *clear* Daniel.

13. **go seeke**] Cf. 'goe tell,' I, i, 260.

14. **hang a pearle**] For the similarity of this line to 'Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl,' in *Doctor Dodypoll*, and for the inferences thence drawn, see Appendix, *Date of Composition*.—W. A. WRIGHT: There are numberless allusions to the wearing of jewels in the ear, both by men and women, in Shakespeare and in contemporary writers. Cf. *Rom. and Jul.* I, v, 48: 'like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear.' Also Marlowe, *Tamburlane*, First Part, I, i; Ben Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, IV, vii; *Every Man out of his Humour*, Induction.—HALLIWELL: There are two allusions in this line—first, to the custom of wearing a pearl in the ear; second, to the notion that the dewdrop was the commencing form of the pearl. 'If we believe the naturalists, Pearl is ingendred of the dew of Heaven in those parts of the earth where it is most pure and serene, and the cockle opening at the first rayes of the sun to receive those precious drops, plungeth into the sea with its booty, and conceives in its shell the pearl which resembles the heavens, and imitateth its clearness.'—*The History of Jewels*, &c. 1675. [One of the 'naturalists' just referred to, who assert that pearls originate from dew, is probably Pliny; see Holland's trans. Ninth Booke, cap. xxxv.]

14. After this line, in Garrick's Version, the Fairy sings as follows. The Air is by 'Mr Mich. Arne:'—

'Kingcup, daffodil and rose,
Shall the fairy wreath compose;
Beauty, sweetness, and delight,
Crown our revels of the night:
Lightly trip it o'er the green
Where the Fairy ring is seen;
So no step of earthly tread,
Shall offend our Lady's head.

'Virtue sometimes droops her wing,
Beauty's bee, may lose her sting;
Fairy land can both combine,
Roses with the eglantine:
Lightly be your measures seen,
Deftly footed o'er the green;
Nor a spectre's baleful head
Peep at our nocturnal tread.'

15. **Lob**] JOHNSON: *Lob, lubber, looby, lobcock*, all denote inactivity of body and dulness of mind.—WARTON (*Obs. on Spenser*, i, 120, 1762), in a note on the 'lubbar-fiend' in *L'Allegro*, remarks that this 'seems to be the same traditionary being that is mentioned by Beaumont and Fletcher: "—There's a pretty tale of a witch, that had the devil's mark about her (God bless us!), that had a giant to her son, that was

Our Queene and all her Elues come heere anon.
Rob. The King doth keepe his Reuels here to night,
Take heed the Queene come not within his ſight,
For *Oberon* is paſsing fell and wrath,
Becauſe that ſhe, as her attendant, hath
A louely boy ſtolne from an Indian King,
She neuer had ſo ſweet a changeling,

16. *her*] *our* Globe (misprint). 21. *boy ſtolne*] *boy ſtollen*, Q_1. *boy, stol'n* Theob. et seq. (except Knt).

called Lob-lie-by-the-fire."—*The Knight of the Burning Pestle*' [III, iv, p. 191, ed. Dyce, who says that this remark of Warton that 'Milton confounded the "lubbar fiend" with the sleepy giant in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* is erroneous.']—COLLIER: The fairy, by this word 'lob,' reproaches Puck with heaviness, compared with his own lightness.—STAUNTON: 'Lob' here, I believe, is no more than another name for *clown* or *fool;* and does not necessarily denote inactivity either of body or mind.—THOMS (*Three Notelets*, p. 89): Dr Johnson's observation in the present place is altogether misplaced. For here the name 'Lob' is doubtless a well-established fairy epithet; and the passage from *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* confirms this. Grimm mentions a remarkable document, dated 1492, in which Bishop Gebhard of Halberstadt, complains of the reverence paid to a spirit called *den guden lubben*, and to whom bones of animals were offered on a mountain.—R. G. WHITE: 'Lob' is here used by the fairy as descriptive of the contrast between Puck's squat figure and the airy shapes of the other fays.—DYCE: R. G. White is probably right. As Puck could fly 'swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow,' and 'could put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes,' the Fairy can hardly mean, as Collier supposes, 'to reproach Puck with heaviness.' [Why should a merry wanderer of the night be 'squat'? Omitting this epithet, I think White's and Staunton's explanation the true one. Any elf taller than a cowslip would be a lubber to a fairy that could creep into an acorn-cup. Many references to the use of the word 'lob' will be found in Nares and Halliwell.—ED.]

16. According to the *List of Songs*, &c of the *New Shakspere Soc.*, the foregoing sixteen lines have been set to music by no less than seven different composers.

19. **fell and wrath**] W. A. WRIGHT: 'Fell' is from the Old French *fel*, Italian *fello*, with which *felon* is connected. 'Wrath' is so written for the sake of the rhyme. In Anglo-Saxon wráð is both the substantive 'wrath' and the adjective 'wroth.'

22. **changeling**] JOHNSON: This is commonly used for the child supposed to be left by the fairies, but here for the child taken away. [The *e* mute in this word is pronounced; for other examples, see Abbott, § 487, or Walker, *Crit.* iii, 47.]—DRAKE (*Sh. and His Times*, ii, 325): The Beings substituted [by the Fairies] for the healthy offspring of man were apparently idiots, monstrous and decrepid in their form, and defective in speech. . . . The cause assigned for this evil propensity on the part of the Fairies was the dreadful obligation they were under of sacrificing the tenth individual to the Devil every, or every seventh, year. . . . For the recovery of the unfortunate substitutes thus selected for the payment of their infernal tribute, various charms and contrivances were adopted, of which the most effectual, though the most horrible, was

And iealous *Oberon* would haue the childe
Knight of his traine, to trace the Forreſts wilde.
But ſhe (perforce) with-holds the loued boy,
Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her ioy.
And now they neuer meete in groue, or greene,
By fountaine cleere, or ſpangled ſtar-light ſheene,

24. *of his*] *of this* F_3F_4.

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the assignment to the flames of the supposed changeling, which it was firmly believed would, in consequence of this treatment, disappear, and the real child return to the lap of its mother. 'A beautiful child of Caerlaveroc, in Nithsdale,' relates Mr Cromek from tradition, 'on the second day of its birth, and before its baptism, was changed, none knew how, for an antiquated elf of hideous aspect. It kept the family awake with its nightly yells, biting the mother's breasts, and would be neither cradled nor nursed. The mother, obliged to be from home, left it in charge to the servant girl. The poor lass was sitting bemoaning herself,—"Wer't nae for thy girning face I would knock the big, winnow the corn, and grun the meal!"—"Lowse the cradle band," quoth the Elf, "and tent the neighbours, and I'll work yere wark." Up started the elf, the wind arose, the corn was chaffed, the outlyers were foddered, and the hand-mill moved around, as by instinct, and the *knocking mell* did its work with amazing rapidity. The lass and her elfin servant rested and diverted themselves, till, on the mistress's approach, it was restored to the cradle, and began to yell anew. The girl took the first opportunity of slyly telling her mistress the adventure. "What'll we do wi' the wee diel?" said she. "I'll wirk it a pirn," replied the lass. At the middle hour of the night the chimney-top was covered up, and every inlet barred and closed. The embers were blown up until glowing hot, and the maid, undressing the elf, tossed it on the fire. It uttered the wildest and most piercing yells, and, in a moment, the Fairies were heard moaning at every wonted avenue, and rattling at the window-boards, at the chimney-head, and at the door. "In the name o' God bring back the bairn," cried the lass. The window flew up; the earthly child was laid unharmed in the mother's lap, while its grisly substitute flew up the chimney with a loud laugh."'—*Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*, p. 308.

24. **to trace**] This has here, I think, a more restricted meaning than 'to walk over, to pace,' as SCHMIDT defines it, or than 'to traverse, wander through,' as defined by W. A. WRIGHT. There is an intimation here of hunting, of tracing the tracks of game (a tautological expression, but which illustrates the meaning). Spenser thus uses it transitively: 'The Monster swift as word, that from her went, Went forth in hast, and did her footing trace,' *Faerie Queene*, III, vii, line 209; in the present passage it is used intransitively, as in Milton's *Comus*, also with the idea of hunting, although this meaning was not attached to it by HOLT WHITE, who first cited the passage: 'And like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen May trace huge forests.'—line 422.—ED.

28. **sheene**] JOHNSON: Shining, bright, gay.—W. A. WRIGHT: Milton, with the passage in his mind, uses 'sheen' as a substantive. See Comus, 1003: 'But far above in spangled sheen, Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd.' [If Milton, at the time of his writing *Comus* had been blind, which he was not, and had listened to

But they do ſquare, that all their Elues for feare
Creepe into Acorne cups and hide them there.
Fai. Either I miſtake your ſhape and making quite,
Or elſe you are that ſhrew'd and knauiſh ſpirit

29. *ſquare*] *quarrel* Wilson.
31. *Either*] *Or* Pope+.
32. *ſpirit*] *ſprite* Q_1, Rowe et seq.

the reading of *A Mid. N. Dream*, he might have readily accepted 'sheen' as a noun, with 'starlight' in the genitive, 'starlight's sheen.'—ED.]

29. **square**] PECK (p. 223): I fancied our author wrote *jar* (a word which sounds very like *squar*), but then a neighbour of mine, on my showing him the passage, guessed *squall* to be the true reading. And I should like *squall* as well as *jar*. . . . Yet, upon the whole, perhaps Shakespeare never wrote 'square' to express a *quarrel*. For I am sometimes inclined to think he wrote, in most of these places, *sparre*.—HALLIWELL: 'I square, I chyde or vary, *je prens noyse*; of all the men lyvyng, I love not to square with hym.'—Palsgrave, 1530. 'To square' was, therefore, properly, to quarrel noisily, to come to high words; but in Shakespeare's time the term was applied generally in the sense of *to quarrel*, and it was also in common use as a substantive.—W. A. WRIGHT: In his description of the singing in the church at Augsburg, Ascham uses the word 'square' in the sense of *jar* or *discord*: 'The præcentor begins the psalm, all the church follows without any square, none behind, none before, but there doth appear one sound of voice and heart amongst them all.'—*Works*, ed. Giles, i, 270. [Cotgrave gives: '*Se quarrer*. To strout, or square it, looke big on 't, carrie his armes a kemboll braggadochio-like.' The examples in Nares and Dyce (*Gloss.*), which it is needless to repeat here, adequately prove the meaning *to quarrel*.—ED.]

29. **that**] For instances of 'that' equivalent to *so that*, see, if need be, ABBOTT, § 283.

31. **Either**] See WALKER (*Vers.* 103) or ABBOTT, § 466, for instances of the contraction, in pronunciation, into monosyllables of such words as *either*, *neither*, *whether*, *mother*, *brother*, *even*, *heaven*, &c. Another instance is in II, ii, 162.

32. **spirit**] See Q_1 in Textual Notes. WALKER (*Crit.* i, 193): It may safely be laid down as a canon that the word 'spirit,' in our old poets, wherever the metre does not compel us to pronounce it disyllabically, is a monosyllable. And this is almost always the case. The truth of this rule is evident from several considerations. In the first place, we never meet with other disyllables—such, I mean, as are incapable of contraction—placed in a similar situation; the apparent exceptions not being really exceptions (see *Vers. passim*). Another argument is founded on the unpleasant ripple which the common pronunciation occasions in the flow of numberless lines, interfering with the general run of the verse; a harshness which, in some passages, must be evident to the dullest ear. Add to this the frequent substitution of *spright* or *sprite* for 'spirit' (in all the different senses of the word, I mean, and not merely in that of *ghost*, in which *sprite* is still used); also *spreet*, though rarely (only in the ante-Elizabethan age, I think, as far as I have observed); and sometimes *sp'rit* and *sprit*. For the double spelling, *spright* and *sprite*, one may compare *despight* and *despite*; which in like manner subsequently assumed different meanings, *despight* being used for *contempt*, *despectus*. . . . Perhaps it would be desirable, wherever the word occurs as a monosyllable, to write it *spright*, in order to ensure the proper pronunciation of

Cal'd Robin Good-fellow. Are you not hee, 33
That frights the maidens of the Villagree,
Skim milke, and ſometimes labour in the querne, 35
And bootleſſe make the breathleſſe huſwife cherne,

33. *you not*] *not you* Q_1, Cap. Sta. Cam. White ii.

34. *frights*] *fright* F_3F_4, Rowe+, Mal. Steev. Var. White i.

Villagree] $Q_2F_2F_3$. *Villagere* Q_1, Rowe, Theob. Warb. Johns. *Vilagree* F_4. *villag'ry* Cap. Steev. *villagery* Han. et cet.

35–38. *Skim...labour...make...make ...Miſleade*] *Skims...labours...makes... makes...misleads* Mal. conj. Coll. Dyce, Huds.

35. *ſometimes*] *sometime* Dyce ii, iii.

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the line. I prefer *spright* to *sprite*, inasmuch as the latter invariably carries with it a spectral association. [See also *Macbeth*, IV, i, 127, or *Mer. of Ven.* V, i, 96, of this edition.]

33–40. In Garrick's *Version* these lines are sung by the Fairy to an Air by Mr Mich. Arne. Many liberties are taken with the text which are not worth reprinting here.

33. **Robin Good-fellow**] See Appendix, *Source of the Plot.*

34, 35, &c. **frights . . . Skim . . . labour**] The Textual Notes will show the grammatical changes adopted by editors in order to give a uniformity which is, after all, needless. ABBOTT, § 224, after several examples of 'he' and 'she' used for *man* and *woman*, adds that 'this makes more natural the use [in the present line] of "he that," with the third person of the verb.' See also 'are you he that hangs?' —*As You Like It*, III, ii, 375, of this ed. Again, in § 415, after sundry examples of a change of construction caused by a change of thought, ABBOTT says of the present passage that 'the transition is natural from "Are not you the person who frights?" to "Do not you skim?"'—W. A. WRIGHT: We have in English both constructions. For instance, in *Exodus* vi, 7: 'And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.' And in *Samuel* v, 2: 'Thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel.'

34. **Villagree**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, village population, and so peasantry. Johnson defines it as a district of villages, but it denotes rather a collection of villagers than a collection of villages. No other instance of the word is recorded.

35, 37. **sometimes . . . sometime**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Both forms of the word were used indifferently; and in the present case the instinctive perception of euphony, which was so constant a guide of Shakespeare's pen, and in this play, perhaps, more so than in any other, seems to have determined the choice.

35, 36. JOHNSON: The sense of these lines is confused. Are not you he (says the fairy) that fright the country girls, that skim milk, work in the hand-mill, and make the tired dairy-woman churn without effect? The mention of the mill seems out of place, for she is not now telling the good, but the evil, that he does. I would regulate the lines thus: 'And sometimes make the breathless housewife churn Skim milk, and bootless labour in the quern.' [Rann adopted this 'regulation.'] Or by a simple transposition of the lines. Yet there is no necessity of alteration.—RITSON: Dr Johnson's observation will apply with equal force to his 'skimming the milk,' which, if it were done at a proper time and the cream preserved, would be a piece of service. But we must understand both to be mischievous pranks. He skims the milk

And ſometime make the drinke to beare no barme,
Miſleade night-wanderers, laughing at their harme,
Thoſe that Hobgoblin call you, and ſweet Pucke,
You do their worke, and they ſhall haue good lucke.
Are not you he?
Rob. Thou ſpeak'ſt aright;

42, 43. One line, Qq.
42. *Thou*] *The same, thou* Han. *I am —thou* Johns. *Fairy, thou* Coll. ii, iii (MS), Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *Indeed, thou* Schmidt.
42. *ſpeak'ſt*] *ſpeakeſt* Q_2. *speakest me* Cap.
ſpeak'ſt aright] *speakest all aright* Wagner conj.

when it ought not to be skimmed, and grinds the corn when it is not wanted.—HALLIWELL: 'Labour in' is equivalent to 'labour with.' In the old ballad of *Robin Goodfellow* he is described as working at a malt-quern for the benefit of the maids. [See Appendix.]

35. **querne**] HALLIWELL: A hand-mill for grinding corn; *cwłorn*, Anglo-Saxon. In its most primitive form it consisted merely of one revolving stone, worked by a handle, moving in the circular cup of a larger one. Boswell, in his *Tour to the Hebrides*, speaks of its being in use there: 'We saw an old woman grinding corn with the *quern*, an ancient Highland instrument, which, it is said, was used by the Romans'; and Dr Johnson, in his *Tour* to the same place, says, 'when the water-mills in Skye and Raasa are too far distant, the housewives grind their oats with a *quern*, or hand-mill.' See Chaucer, *Monke's Tale*, where Sampson is described, 'But now he is in prisoun in a cave, Ther as thay made him at the querne grynde' [l. 83, ed. Morris]. In Wiclif's translation of the New Testament a passage is thus rendered: 'tweine wymmen schulen ben gryndynge in o querne, oon schal be taken and the tother leſte.'—DELIUS unaccountably prefers to interpret 'quern' not as a hand-mill, but as the ordinary *churn*, 'in which,' he adds, 'milk is turned into butter.'

37. **barme**] STEEVENS: A name for *yeast*, yet used in our Midland counties, and universally in Ireland.—HALLIWELL: This provincial term is still in use in Warwickshire, and in 1847 I observed a card advertising 'fresh barm' in Henley Street, at Stratford-on-Avon, within a few yards of the poet's birth-place.

38. **Misleade**] HALLIWELL: This line was remembered by Milton, 'a wand'ring fire. . . . Hovering and blazing with delusive light, Misleads th' amaz'd night-wanderer from his way.'—*Par. Lost*, ix, 634.

39. **sweet Pucke**] TYRWHITT: The epithet is by no means superfluous, as 'Puck' alone was far from being an endearing appellation. It signified nothing better than *fiend* or *devil*. [See p. 3, *antè*, or Appendix, *Source of the Plot*.]

42. **Thou**] JOHNSON: I would fill up the verse which, I suppose, the author left complete—'*I am*, thou speak'st aright.'—COLLIER (ed. ii): *Fairy* [see Text. Notes] is from the MS. Some word of two syllables is wanting to complete the line. (Ed. iii): Here, we may be pretty sure, we have the poet's own word.—DYCE: *Fairy* is far better than the other attempts that have been made to complete the metre.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Collier's MS is probably correct. But as the pause naturally made before the reply to the fairy's question may have been intended to take the place of the missing foot, I have made no addition to the text of the Qq and Ff. ABBOTT, § 506, agrees with R. G. White, as also the present ED.

I am that merrie wanderer of the night: 43
I ieſt to *Oberon*, and make him ſmile,
When I a fat and beane-fed horſe beguile, 45
Neighing in likeneſſe of a ſilly foale,
And ſometime lurke I in a Goſſips bole,
In very likeneſſe of a roaſted crab:
And when ſhe drinkes, againſt her lips I bob,
And on her withered dewlop poure the Ale. 50
The wiſeſt Aunt telling the ſaddeſt tale,

46. *of a*] *like a* F_3F_4, Rowe. *ſilly*] Q_2Ff, Rowe+, Hal. *ſilly* Q_2 et cet.
47. *ſometime*] *ſometimes* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
47. *bole*] *bowl* F_4.
49. *bob*] *bab* Gould.
50. *withered*] QqFf, Rowe, Cam. ii. *wither'd* Pope et cet. *dewlop*] *dewlap* Rowe ii.

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43. See Delius's note on line 154, below.

46. **silly foale**] HALLIWELL: 'Silly' is probably the right reading, in the sense of *simple*. [For the folk-lore in reference to the various animals whereof the shapes were assumed by fairies, see THOMS's *Three Notelets*, p. 55. I can see no reason for deserting the Folio.—ED.]

47. **Gossips bole**] W. A. WRIGHT: Originally a christening-cup; for a gossip or godsib was properly a sponsor. Hence, from signifying those who were associated at the festivities of a christening, it came to denote generally those who were accustomed to make merry together. Archbishop Trench mentions that the word retains its original signification among the peasantry of Hampshire. He adds, 'Gossips are, first, the sponsors, brought by the act of a common sponsorship into affinity and near familiarity with one another; secondly, these sponsors, who, being thus brought together, allow themselves one with the other in familiar, and then in trivial and idle, talk; thirdly, any who allow themselves in this trivial and idle talk, called in French *commèrage*, from the fact that *commère* has run through exactly the same stages as its English equivalent.'—*Eng. Past and Present*, pp. 204–5, 4th ed. Warton, in his note on Milton's *L'Allegro*, 100, identifies 'the spicy nut-brown ale' with the gossip's bowl of Shakespeare. 'The composition was ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast, and roasted crabs or apples. It was called Lambs-wool.' See Breton's *Fantastickes, January:* 'An Apple and a Nutmeg make a Gossip's cup.'

48. **very**] That is, true, exact.

48. **crab**] STEEVENS: That is, a wild apple of that name.—HALLIWELL: 'The crabbe groweth somewhat like the apple-tree, but full of thornes, and thicker of branches; the flowers are alike, but the fruite is generally small and very sower, yet some more than others, which the country people, to amend, doe usually rost them at the fire, and make them their winter's junckets.'—Parkinson's *Theat. Botanicum*, 1640.

51. **Aunt**] Unquestionably 'aunt' was at times applied to a woman of low character (see the examples cited by NARES, *s. v.*), but here the adjective 'wisest' shows that it means merely 'the most sedate old woman.' R. G. WHITE calls attention to the common use of 'aunt' as well as 'uncle,' as applied to 'good-natured old people' at

Sometime for three-foot ſtoole, miſtaketh me,
Then ſlip I from her bum, downe topples ſhe,
And tailour cries, and fals into a coffe.
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loffe,

54. *tailour*] *rails, or* Han. Warb. Cap. *tail-sore* Anon ap. Cap. 55. *loffe*] *laugh* Coll. Cam.

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the North and to the old negroes at the South; HALLIWELL cites Pegge as authority for a similar usage in Cornwall.

54. **tailour**] JOHNSON: The custom of crying *tailor* at a sudden fall backwards I think I remember to have observed. He that slips beside his chair falls as a tailor squats upon his board.—HALLIWELL: This explanation by Dr Johnson has not been satisfactorily supported. The expression is probably one of contempt, equivalent to *thief*, and possibly a corruption of the older word *taylard*, which occurs in the Romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, where two French justices term that sovereign, when reviling him, a 'taylard,' upon which the choleric monarch instantly clove the skull of the first and nearly killed the second. The Elizabethan use of the term, as one of contempt, appears to be confirmed by the following passage in *Pasquil's Night Cap*, 1612: 'Theeving is now an occupation made, Though men the name of tailor doe it give.'—BELL (iii, 194): It may be thought fanciful, but not altogether improbable, to explain this custom by one equally low at the present day, as when blackguards press rudely the hats of passengers over their eyes; and of a female's cry: *bonnet her*. So that I should read: *tail her*.—PERRING (p. 113) would read *traitor*, on the score that it would be much more consistent with the aunt's 'disposition, her age, her dignity, and, I may add, with the serious nature of her story, to raise against her invisible foe that fierce cry of "traitor," which was wont to be raised against suspected political malcontents, . . . in using which the "wisest aunt" associated herself with kings and queens and empresses of the earth.' [It is difficult to believe that this is put forth seriously. A discussion was started in *Notes & Queries* (7th S. ii, 385, 1886) by J. BOUCHIER asking 'Why tailor any more than cobbler, hosier, or barber?' To which A. H. (7th S. iii, 42) replied that a tailor's assistance would be needed when 'a sudden tumble eventuates in the rent of a necessary garment.' This interpretation was pronounced untenable by C. F. S. WARREN, M. A. (Ib. p. 264), 'because a sudden fall backwards will not split petticoats as it will trousers.'—HYDE CLARKE adds, with more truth than appositeness, that 'there were tailors for women in most countries of the West and East, as there still are in many. In London tailors make riding breeches for women.' In this diverting discussion, from Halliwell downwards, it needs scarcely an ounce of civet to sweeten the imagination, if it be suggested that the slight substitution of an *e* for an *o* in the word 'tailor' will show that, as boys in swimming take a '*header*,' the wisest Aunt was subjected to the opposite.—ED.]

55. **quire**] DYCE: A company, an assembly. [With a suggestion here of its meaning of acting in concert.—ED.]

55. **loffe**] CAPELL (104): A rustic sounding of *laugh*, to whose spelling all the elder editions assimilate 'cough,' and its sound should incline to it.—HALLIWELL: This is the ancient pronunciation of the word. Ben Jonson, in *The Fox*, makes *slaughter* rhyme with *laughter*; and in the old nursery ballad of *Mother Hubbard*, after she had bought her dog a 'coffin' she came home and found he was *loffing!* In

And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and ſweare, 56
A merrier houre vvas neuer waſted there.
But roome Fairy, heere comes *Oberon.* 58

56. *waxen*] *yexen* Farmer, Sing.
58. *roome*] *make room* Pope+, Cap. Ktly. *room now* Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *room, room* Marshall.
58. *Fairy*] *Faery* Johns. conj. Steev. Mal. Knt. *Fa̅ry* Sing. i, ii, Sta.

some line in Harrington's *Most Elegant and Wittie Epigrams*, 1633, *lafter* (laughter) rhymes with *after*. There appears to have been some variation as to the pronunciation of the word. Marston, in *The Parasitaster*, 1606, mentions a critic who vowed 'to leve to posteritie the true orthography and pronunciation of laughing.' [I doubt if Halliwell's quotation from Marston be exactly germane. The 'critique' to whom it refers was in 'the Ship of Fools,' and his puzzle was, I think, not the mere spelling or pronunciation of the word *laugh* or *laughter*, but what combination of letters would express the sound of *laughing*, a puzzle which need not be restricted to the days of Elizabeth. It is almost impossible to fix the exact pronunciation, in the XVIth or XVIIth century, of *laugh* or *laughter*, especially as there are indications of a change which was at this time creeping over these words as well as such words as *daughter*, *slaughter*, and the like. See ELLIS (*Early Eng. Pronunciation*, p. 963). As a boy of 16, in Warwickshire, Shakespeare may have heard a pronunciation of these words quite different from that which he heard in his mature years, in London. See *Ibid.* p. 144. In the present spelling I think we have, as Capell suggests, a phonetic attempt to reproduce the 'robustious' laughter of boors, just as, nowadays, Chawbacon's laughter is spelled 'Haw! haw!' and 'loffe' should be retained in the text. WHALLEY refers to Milton's *L'Allegro:* 'And Laughter holding both his sides,' line 32.—ED.]

56. **waxen**] JOHNSON: That is, *increase*, as the moon *waxes*.—STEEVENS: Dr Farmer observes to me that 'waxen' is probably corrupted from *yoxen* or *yexen*, to hiccup. It should be remembered that Puck is at present speaking with an affectation of ancient phraseology. SINGER pronounces Farmer's needless emendation to be 'undoubtedly the true reading,' and adopts, without acknowledgement, *more suo*, Steevens's remark about the affectation of ancient phraseology, of which affectation I see no proof.—ED.

56. **neeze**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, *sneeze;* A.-S. *niesan;* Germ. *niesen*. Similarly, we find the two forms of the same word: 'knap' and 'snap'; 'top' and 'stop'; 'cratch' and 'scratch'; 'lightly' and 'slightly'; 'quinsy' and 'squinancy.' In *2 Kings* iv, 35, the text originally stood, 'And the child neesed seven times,' but the word has been altered in modern editions to 'sneezed.' In *Job* xli, 18, however, 'neesings' still holds its place. Compare *Homilies* (ed. Griffiths, 1859), p. 227: 'Using these sayings: such as learn, God and St. Nicholas be my speed; such as neese, God help and St. John; to the horse, God and St. Loy save thee.' Cotgrave gives both forms, 'Esternuer. To neeze or sneeze.'

58. **roome Fairy**] JOHNSON: Fairy, or Faery, was sometimes of three syllables, as often in Spenser.—DYCE (ed. ii): I have inserted *now* for the metre's sake, which is surely preferable to the usual modern emendation, '*make* room.' To print 'But room *Fa̅ry*' is too ridiculous.—NICHOLSON (*N. & Qu.* 3d Ser. V, 49, 1864) suggests *roomer*, a sea-phrase, 'which, in speaking of the sailing of ships, meant to alter the course, and go free of one another.' Thus, in Hakluyt, Best, narrating how in

Fair. And heere my Miſtris:
Would that he vvere gone.

Enter the King of Fairies at one doore with his traine, and the Queene at another with hers.

Ob. Ill met by Moone-light,
Proud *Tytania.*
Qu. What, iealous *Oberon?* Fairy skip hence.

59, 60. One line, Qq, Pope et seq.
60. *he*] *we* Ff, Rowe, Johns.
[Scene II. Pope+, Var. Knt, Sing. Ktly.
61. the King] King F_3F_4.
63, 64. One line, Qq, Pope et seq.
64. Tytania] Titania F_3F_4, Rowe et seq.
65. Qu.] Tit. Cap. et seq. (subs.).
Fairy skip] *fairies, skip* Theob. Han. Warb. Johns. Coll. Sing. White, Sta. Dyce, Cam. Ktly.

Frobisher's second voyage the ships were caught in a storm amidst drifting icebergs, says: 'We went roomer [off our course, and more before the wind] for one (iceberg), and loofed [luffed up in the wind] for another.' Hence *roomer* aptly expresses one of two courses which must be adopted by an inferior vessel when it meets another, whose sovereignty entitles her to hold on her way unchecked. The fairy had luffed, and so stayed her course to speak with Puck. Having interchanged civilities, Here, says Puck, comes Oberon, bearing down upon you full sail; do you, vassal as you are of a power that he is unfriends with, alter your course; go off before the wind, and free of him. In a word, *roomer*. If objection be made to the use, by Puck, of a sea-phrase, I would quote the inlander Romeo, who speaks of the high top-gallant of his joy. ABBOTT, § 484, who gives more than twenty pages to examples of the lengthening of words in scanning, has 'room' in the present passage among them. [No change is absolutely necessary. The break in the line affords, I think, sufficient pause to fill up the metre.—ED.]

63. See Delius's note on line 154, below.

65. **Fairy skip**] THEOBALD silently changed this to *Fairies skip*, and the Text. Notes show how generally he has been followed by the best editors, who have urged as their plea: first, the ease with which the final *s* of *Fairies* might have been lost to the ear in the first *s* of 'skip.'—WALKER (*Crit.* i, 265) cites this passage in his *Article* on the omission of the *s*, and says the words are 'surely' '*Fairies* skip.'—COLLIER finds no reason why a particular fairy should be addressed unless we suppose that Oberon is referred to; but this DYCE (ed. i) disproves by citing the following line: 'I have forsworn *his* bed and company.' Secondly, Titania evidently wishes her whole train to withdraw, because at line 149 she distinctly says, 'Fairies away.'—B. NICHOLSON (*N. & Qu.* 4th Ser. V, 56) questions the conclusiveness of this last command, because the circumstances may have changed, and while the king and queen have been wrangling the attendant courtiers and maids of honour may have been frisking, flirting, intermingling, and have become scattered, and her majesty wishes to recall them.—CAPELL (p. 104) is the only editor who justifies the Folio, and, I think, with adequate reason for so trifling a question, which, after all, is mainly for the eye; Capell says that the fairy thus addressed is Titania's 'leading fairy, her gentleman-usher, whose moving-off would be a signal for all the rest of the train.'—COLLIER

I haue forſworne his bed and companie.
Ob. Tarrie raſh Wanton ; am not I thy Lord ?
Qu. Then I muſt be thy Lady : but I know
When thou vvaſt ſtolne away from Fairy Land,
And in the ſhape of *Corin*, ſate all day,
Playing on pipes of Corne, and verſing loue
To amorous *Phillida*. Why art thou heere
Come from the farthеſt ſteepe of *India* ?

69. *vvaſt*] Ff, Rowe, Pope, Ktly. *haſt* Qq, Theob. et seq. 70. *ſate*] *ſat* QqF$_4$. 73. *ſteepe*] *ſteppe* Q$_1$. *step* Cap.

reports an emendation by HARNESS: 'Fairies *keep*'; and DYCE adds one of his own: 'Fairies *trip*.'

69. vvast] KEIGHTLEY (*N. & Q.* 2d Ser. IV, 262; *Exp.* 131) is the only editor who upholds the reading of the Ff. He maintains that by 'wast' Titania means that Oberon 'stole away' only once, whereas 'hast' of the Qq implies a habit. 'Moreover, Shakespeare invariably employs the verb substantive with "stolen away," except in the case of a doubly-compound tense.'

71. Corne] RITSON: The shepherd boys of Chaucer's time had '—many flowte and liltyng horne, And pipes made of grene corne.'—[*House of Fame*, iii, 133, ed. Morris. Albeit that 'corn' is, in England, applied to any cereal, yet the 'pipes of corn' on which Corin played were probably the same as the '*oaten* straws' on which 'the shepherds pipe' in *Love's Lab. Lost*, V, ii, 913; *avena* is used in Latin in the same way. The 'corne' mentioned in line 98, below, is, of course, not oats, but wheat.—ED.]

72. Phillida] F. A. MARSHALL (p. 369): Do not these lines rather militate against the idea of Oberon and Titania being such very diminutive people? Could a manikin hope to impress the 'amorous Phillida'? Again, Oberon's retort on Titania seems to imply that she was capable of inspiring a passion in that prototype of all Don Juans, Theseus. Perhaps these fairies were supposed to possess the power of assuming the human shape and size, or, what is more likely, to Shakespeare they were so entirely creatures of the imagination that they never assumed, to his mind's eye, any concrete form. [In the first place, if we must resort to a prosaic interpretation, Marshall's query is answered by the fact that Oberon assumed 'the shape of Corin'; in the second place, one of the strokes of humour in this whole scene, between atomies who can creep into acorn-cups, and for whom the waxen thigh of a bee affords an ample torch, lies in the assumption by them of human powers and of superhuman importance. Not only is Titania jealous of the bouncing Amazon, but this their quarrel influences the moon in the sky, changes the seasons, and affects disastrously the whole human race. There is a touch of the same humour, but deeply coarsened, in the scandal which Gulliver's conduct started when he was at the court of Laputa.—ED.]

73. steepe] WHITE (ed. i): *Steppe*, of the first Quarto, is 'but a strange accident, for the word was not known in Shakespeare's day.'—W. A. WRIGHT: It is dangerous to assert a proposition which may be disproved by a single instance of the contrary. There is certainly no *a priori* reason why the present passage should not furnish that instance, inasmuch as a word of similar origin, 'horde,' was perfectly well

But that forſooth the bouncing *Amazon*
Your buskin'd Miſtreſſe, and your Warrior loue,
To *Theſeus* muſt be Wedded ; and you come,
To giue their bed ioy and proſperitie.
Ob. How canſt thou thus for ſhame *Tytania*,
Glance at my credite, vvith *Hippolita*?
Knowing I knovv thy loue to *Theſeus*?
Didſt thou not leade him through the glimmering night
From *Peregenia*, whom he rauiſhed?
And make him vvith faire Eagles breake his faith

75. *buskin'd*] *bukskined* so quoted many times by Hermann.
81. *through the glimmering night*] *glimmering through the night* Warb.
82. Peregenia] *Perigune* Theob. Pope ii. *Perigunè* Theob. ii. *Perigynè* Han. *Perigouna* White.
83. *Eagles*] *Ægle* Rowe et seq.

known in England at the beginning of the 17th century. On the other hand, too much weight must not be attached to the spelling of Q_1, for in III, ii, 88, 'sleep' is misprinted *slippe*. [It is almost needless to restrict to Q_1 this variation in spelling; it applies to the Folios as well; in the very passage referred to by W. A. Wright, *sleep* is printed 'slip' in all the Folios, and was first corrected by Rowe. According to the *Century Dictionary*, *steppe* was introduced into the scientific literature of Western Europe by Humboldt, and in popular use it is nowhere applied but to regions dominated by Russia; there is no need of its use, I think, in the present passage.—ED.]

76. **must**] Simply definite futurity, as in Portia's, 'Then must the Jew be merciful.' For other instances, see ABBOTT, § 314.

79. **Glance**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, *hint at, indirectly attack*. Thus, in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, i, 7, § 8 (p. 57, ed. Wright): 'But when Marcus Philosophus came in, Silenus was gravelled and out of countenance, not knowing where to carp at him; save at the last he gave a glance at his patience towards his wife.'

81. **glimmering**] WARBURTON upholds his wanton emendation by asserting that Titania conducted Theseus 'in the appearance of fire through the dark night.' Had he forgotten 'The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day,' *Macb.* III, iii, 5? —ED.

82. **Peregenia**] STAUNTON: 'This Sinnis had a goodly faire daughter called Perigouna, which fled away when she saw her father slaine. . . . But Theseus finding her, called her, and sware by his faith he would use her gently, and do her no hurt, nor displeasure at all.'—North's *Plutarch* [p. 279, ed. Skeat. MALONE thinks that Shakespeare changed the name for the sake of rhythm, but the rhythm remains the same with either spelling, and we are by no means certain that Shakespeare took the name from Plutarch, or that he ever saw the name as it is thus spelled by the printer.—ED.]

83. **Eagles**] STAUNTON: 'For some say that Ariadne hung herself for sorrow, when she saw that Theseus had cast her off. Other write, that she was transported by mariners into the ile of Naxos, where she was married unto Œnarus, the priest of Bacchus; and they think that Theseus left her, because he was in love with another,

With *Ariadne*, and *Atiopa*?
Que. Theſe are the forgeries of iealouſie,
And neuer ſince the middle Summers ſpring
Met vve on hil, in dale, forreſt, or mead,
By paued fountaine, or by ruſhie brooke,
Or in the beached margent of the ſea,

84. Atiopa] Antiopa QqFf.
86. *the*] *that* Han. Warb. Cap. *ſpring*] *prime* D. Wilson.
89. *in the*] QqFf, Rowe, Hal. Sta. Dyce, Cam. Wh. ii. *on the* Pope et cet.

as by these verses should appear: Ægles, the nymph, was loved of Theseus, Who was the daughter of Panopeus.'—North's *Plutarch* [p. 284, ed. Skeat].—DYCE (*Remarks*, p. 46): In Shakespeare's time it was not uncommon to use the genitive of proper names for the nominative. At an earlier period this practice prevailed almost universally. Even in a modern book, and the work of a scholar, we find, 'a natural grotto, more beautiful than Ælian's description of Atalanta's, or that in Homer, where *Calypsos* lived.'—Amory's *Life of John Buncle*, i, 214, ed. 1756. [Is it not a little misleading to call this added final *s* the sign of the 'genitive case'? Walker's long list (*Crit.* i, 233) shows the frequency with which the final *s* was added, not only to proper names, but to all words. If it be the genitive case in 'Eagles,' why should this solitary genitive be surrounded by the nominative forms 'Peregenia,' 'Ariadne,' and 'Antiopa'? We need some other cause than inflection, I think, to explain this sibilant tendency, be it in some peculiar flourish in writing, or be it in some delicate phonetic demand, which our modern ears have lost.—ED.]

84. **Atiopa**] STAUNTON: 'Philochurus, and some other hold opinion, that [Theseus] went thither with Hercules against the Amazons: and that to honour his valiantness, Hercules gave him Antiopa the Amazone. . . . Bion . . . saith that he brought her away by deceit and stealth, . . . and that Theseus enticed her to come into his ship, who brought him a present; and so soon as she was aboord, he hoysed his sail, and so carried her away.'—North's *Plutarch* [p. 286, ed. Skeat].

86. **the**] WARBURTON: We should read *that*. It appears to have been some years since the quarrel first began.—CAPELL adopts this emendation, and also believes that the midsummer was 'a distant one'; it is not easy to see on what ground. Perhaps on the supposition that the quarrel began at the birth of the little Indian boy, or when Oberon piped to amorous Phillida. But there is no intimation of it in the text. —ED.

86. **middle Summers spring**] CAPELL (*Notes*, ii, 104) understands this as the spring preceding the 'midsummer in which the quarrel took place.'—But STEEVENS shows that it means 'the beginning of *middle* or *mid* summer.' 'Spring,' for *beginning* is used in *2 Hen. IV.*: IV, iv, 35: 'As flaws congealed in the spring of day.' Also in *Luke* i, 78: 'Whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.'

88. **paued fountaine**] HENLEY: That is, fountains whose beds were covered with pebbles, in opposition to those of the rushy brooks, which are oozy.—KNIGHT: 'Paved' is here used in the same sense as in the 'pearl-paved ford' of Drayton, the 'pebble-paved channel' of Marlowe, and the 'coral-paven bed' of Milton.

89. **in**] HALLIWELL: That is, *within*; unnecessarily changed by Pope.—DYCE (ed. i): 'In' was often used for *on*. So in *Cymb.* III, vi, 50: 'Gold strew'd i' the

To dance our ringlets to the whiſtling Winde, 90
But vvith thy braules thou haſt diſturb'd our ſport.
Therefore the Windes, piping to vs in vaine, 92

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floor' (where Boswell cites, from the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy will be done in earth').—1863. Mr W. N. Lettsom observes to me: 'Is it not hazardous to retain "*in* the beachèd margent," when Shakespeare has written, in *A Lover's Complaint*, "*Upon* whose margent weeping she was set"? It is true that *in* is frequently used before *earth*, *mountain*, *hill*, and the like; but this scarcely warrants "*in* the floor," for the word *floor* seems to give exclusively the notion of *surface*, while the other words express also *abode* or *locality*. It is, besides, not merely more or less probable, but positively certain, that printers confound these prepositions, as, for instance, in *Rich. III*: V, i, "To turn their own points *on* their masters' bosoms," where the Ff have *in*, the Qq *on*.' [See 'falling in the Land,' line 94, below. Mrs Furness's *Concordance* gives many instances where 'in' is used where we should use *on*. The question of changing the present text to *on* should be weighed only by an editor of a modern text, for the use of young beginners.—ED.]

89. **beached**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, formed by a beach, or which serves as a beach. Cf. *Timon*, V. i, 219: 'Upon the beached verge of the salt flood.' For similar instances of adjectives formed from substantives, see 'guiled,' *Mer. of Ven.* III, ii, 97; 'disdain'd,' *1 Hen. IV*: I, iii, 183; 'simple-answer'd,' that is, simple in your answer, furnished with a simple answer, which is the reading of the Ff in *Lear*, III, vii, 43; 'the caged cloister,' the cloister which serves as a cage, *Lover's Com.* 249; 'ravin'd,' for ravenous, *Macb.* IV, i, 24; 'poysened,' for poisonous, Lily, *Euphues*, p. 196 (ed. Arber): 'Nylus breedeth the precious stone and the poysened serpent.' [Also 'the delighted spirit,' *Meas. for Meas.* III, i, 121.]

89. **margent**] HALLIWELL: One of the old forms of *margin*, of so exceedingly common occurrence as merely to require a passing notice. It seems to have first come in use in the sixteenth century, and has only become obsolete within the past generation, many instances of it occurring in writers of the time of the first Georges. —W. A. WRIGHT: Shakespeare never uses *margin*.

90. **ringlets**] W. A. WRIGHT refers these 'ringlets' to the 'orbs' in line 8, above. Can they be the same? The fairy rings 'whereof the ewe not bites' are found where grass grows green in pastures, but not by the paved fountain nor by rushy brook, and never in the beached margent of the sea, on those yellow sands where, of all places, from Shakespeare's day to this, fairies foot it featly, and toss their gossamer ringlets to the whistling and the music of the wind.—ED.

91. **braules**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, quarrels. Originally, a *brawl* was a French dance, as in *Love's Lab. L.* III, i, 9: 'Will you win your love with a French brawl?' And it was a dance of a violent and boisterous character, as appears by the following extract from Cotgrave: 'Bransle: m. A totter, swing, or swidge; a shake, shog, or shocke; a stirring, an vncertain and inconstant motion; . . . also, a brawle, or daunce, wherein many (men and women) holding by the hands sometimes in a ring, and other whiles at length, moue altogether.' It may be, however, that there is no etymological connexion between these two words, which are the same in form.—MURRAY (*New Eng. Dict.*) separates this word from *brawl*, a French dance; the origin and primary sense of the former are uncertain.

92. **piping to us in vain**] 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced.' —*Matt.* xi, 17.

As in reuenge, haue fuck'd vp from the ſea
Contagious fogges : Which falling in the Land,
Hath euerie petty Riuer made ſo proud,
That they haue ouer-borne their Continents.
The Oxe hath therefore ſtretch'd his yoake in vaine,
The Ploughman loſt his ſweat, and the greene Corne
Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold ſtands empty in the drowned field,
And Crowes are fatted vvith the murrion flocke,
The nine mens Morris is fild vp with mud,

95. *Hath*] QqFf, Rowe i, Ktly. *Have* Rowe ii et cet.
petty] Ff, White. *paltry* Bell. *pelting* Qq et cet.
99. *his youth*] *its youth* Pope, Han. Warb.
101. *murrion*] QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Theob. i, Cam. *murrain* Theob. ii et cet.
102. *nine mens Morris*] *nine mens morris* F_3. *Nine-mens-morris* F_4, Rowe, Dyce ii, iii. *nine-mens morris* Pope. *nine-mens morrice* Cap.

95. **Hath**] For other examples of singular verbs following relatives, when the antecedents are plural, see ABBOTT, § 247.—W. A. WRIGHT: 'Hath,' following 'Land,' is here singular by attraction.

95. **petty**] I can see no reason why we should here desert the Folio, especially as there is, according to all authorities, from Dr Johnson down, a tinge of contempt in the 'pelting' of the Qq, which is here needless; insignificance is all-sufficient.—ED.

96. **they**] W. A. WRIGHT: The plural follows loosely, as representing the collection of individual rivers.

96. **Continents**] JOHNSON: Borne down the banks that contain them. So in *Lear*, III, ii, 58: '—close pent-up guilts Rive your concealing continents.'

97, &c. WARBURTON maintains that the assertion that Shakespeare borrowed the description of the miseries of the country from Ovid (*Met.* V, 474–484) will admit of no dispute. No editor, as far as I know, has taken any notice of this indisputable instance of Shakespeare's thieving propensity, except HALLIWELL, who gives at length Golding's translation, which he who has time to waste may read on p. 64 of that Translation, ed. 1567.—ED.

101. **murrion**] No one familiar with the Old Testament needs to be told the meaning of this word; see *Exodus* ix, 3.—'For the variety of the spelling', says W. A. WRIGHT, 'compare *Lear*, I, i, 65, where the Ff are divided between "champains" and "champions."'

102. **nine mens Morris**] JAMES: In that part of Warwickshire where Shakespeare was educated, and in the neighbouring parts of Northamptonshire, the shepherds and other boys dig up the turf with their knives to represent a sort of imperfect chess-board. It consists of a square, sometimes only a foot in diameter, sometimes three or four yards. Within this is another square, every side of which is parallel to the external square, and these squares are joined by lines drawn from each corner of both squares, and the middle of each line. One party, or player, has wooden pegs, the other stones, which they move in such a manner as to take up each other's men as they are called, and the area of the inner square is called the pound, in which the

And the queint Mazes in the wanton greene, 103

103. *queint*] *quaint* Johns. 103. *in*] *on* Coll. MS.

men taken up are impounded. These figures are always cut upon the green turf or leys, as they are called, or upon the grass at the end of ploughed lands, and in rainy seasons never fail to be choked up with mud.—ALCHORNE: A figure is made on the ground by cutting out the turf, and two persons take each nine stones, which they place by turns in the angles, and afterwards move alternately, as at chess or draughts. He who can place three in a straight line may then take off any one of his adversary's, where he pleases, till one, having lost all his men, loses the game. [This variety of the game corresponds with what W. A. WRIGHT says he has seen in Suffolk: 'Three squares, instead of two, are drawn one within the other, and the middle points of the parallel sides are joined by straight lines, leaving the inmost square for the pound. But the corners of the squares are not joined. The corners of the squares and the middle points of the sides are the places where the men may be put, and they move from place to place along the line which joins them.'—COTGRAVE gives s. v. *Merelles*, 'The boyish game called Merills, or fiue-pennie Morris; played here most commonly with stones, but in France with pawnes, or men made of purpose, and tearmed *Merelles*.'—DOUCE (i, 184): This game was sometimes called *the nine mens merrils*, from *merelles* or *mereaux*, an ancient French word for the jettons or counters, with which it was played. The other term, *morris*, is probably a corruption suggested by the sort of *dance* which in the progress of the game the counters performed. In the French *merelles* each party had three counters only, which were to be placed in a line in order to win the game. It appears to have been the *Tremerel* mentioned in an old fabliau. . . . Dr Hyde thinks the morris or merrils was known during the time that the Normans continued in possession of England, and that the name was afterwards corrupted into *three mens morals* or *nine mens morals*. If this be true, the conversion of *morals* into *morris*, a term so very familiar to the country people, was extremely natural. The doctor adds that it was likewise called *nine-penny*, or *nine-pin miracle*, *three-penny morris*, *five-penny morris*, *nine-penny morris*, or *three-pin*, *five-pin*, and *nine-pin morris*, all corruptions of *three-pin*, &c. *merels*.—Hyde, *Hist. Nerdiludii*, p. 202.—STAUNTON: Whether the game is now obsolete in France, I am unable to say; but it is still practised, though rarely, in this country, both on the turf and on the table, its old title having undergone another mutation and become 'Mill.' [See also Nares, *Glossary;* Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 279, sec. ed.; Halliwell ad loc. &c., &c.]

103. **queint Mazes**] STEEVENS: This alludes to a sport still followed by boys, *i. e.* what is now called *running the figure of eight*.—W. A. WRIGHT: But I have seen very much more complicated figures upon village greens, and such as might strictly be called mazes or labyrinths. On St. Catherine's Hill, Winchester, 'near the top of it, on the north-east side, is the form of a labyrinth, impressed upon the turf, which is always kept entire by the coursing of the sportive youth through its meanderings. The fabled origin of this Dædalæan work is connected with that of the Dulce Domum song.'—Milner, *Hist. of Winchester*, ii, 155.—HALLIWELL gives a wood-cut from an old print of *The Shepherd's Race* or *Robin Hood's Race*, 'a maze which was formerly on the summit of a hill near St. Ann's Well, about one mile from Nottingham. The length of the path was 535 yards, but it was all obliterated by the plough in the year 1797, on the occasion of the enclosure of the lordship of Sneinton.'

For lacke of tread are vndiſtinguiſhable.
The humane mortals want their winter heere, 105

105, 106. Transposed to follow line 112. Elze (*Notes*, 1880, p. 41).
105. *want... heere,*] *want,... here;* White ii. *wail...here;* Kinnear.
105. *winter heere,*] *winter here.* Q_2. *winter chear* [i. e. *cheer*] Theob. conj. Han. Sing. ii, Coll. ii, Hal. Dyce ii, iii. *winter hoar;* Herr. *winter hire* D. Wilson. *winter gear* Brae ap. Cam.

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105. **humane mortals**] That is, mankind as distinguished from fairies; Titania, herself immortal, afterwards (line 140) refers to the mother of her changeling as 'being mortal'; and a fairy addresses Bottom with, 'Hail, mortal, hail!' thus indicating that fairies were not mortal. But STEEVENS, unmindful of the fact that Shakespeare's fairies are unlike all other fairies, especially unlike the fairies of *Huon of Bordeaux*, or of Spenser, started a controversy by asserting that 'fairies were not *human*, but they were yet *subject to mortality*,' and 'that "human" might have been here employed to mark the difference between *men* and *fairies*.' The controversy which followed, which may be found in the *Variorum* of 1821, and in Ritson's *Quip Modest*, p. 12, it would be a waste of time to transfer to these pages, and which, since Ritson was one of the disputants, it would be superfluous to characterise as acrimonious.—ED.

105. **want their winter heere**] THEOBALD: I once suspected it should be 'want their winter chear,' *i. e.* their jollity, usual merry-makings at that season.—WARBURTON: It seems to me as plain as day that we ought to read 'want their winters heried,' *i. e.* praised, celebrated; an old word, and the line that follows shows the propriety of it here.—CAPELL (*Notes*, ii, 104): That is, their accustomed winter, in a country thus afflicted; to wit, a winter enlivened with mirth and distinguished with grateful hymns to their deities.—JOHNSON proposed that we should read 'want their *wonted year*,' and transposed the lines as follows: 105, 111–118, 106, 107, 108, 110, 109, 119. His conjecture re-appeared only in the Variorums of 1773, 1778, and 1785; it was omitted, after his death, from the Variorum of 1793.—MALONE'S note in the Variorum of 1790, which is sometimes quoted as 'Malone's own,' is merely a combination of the note of Theobald and Capell.—KNIGHT: The ingenious author of a pamphlet, *Explanations and Emendations*, &c., Edinburgh, 1814, would read: 'The human mortals want; their winter here, No night,' &c. The writer does not support his emendation by any argument, but we believe that he is right. [Knight adopted this punctuation in his text.] The swollen rivers have rotted the corn, the fold stands empty, the flocks are murrain, the sports of summer are at an end, the human mortals *want*. This is the climax. Their winter is *here*—is come—although the season is the latter summer [how does this accord with the title of the play?—ED.] or autumn; and in consequence the hymns and carols which gladdened the nights of a seasonable winter are wanting to this premature one.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): It is barely possible that 'want' is a misprint for *chant*, and that Titania, wishing to contrast the gloom of the spurious, with the merriment of the real, Winter, says, 'when their Winter is here, the human mortals chant; but *now* no night is blessed with hymn or carol'; and that we should read: 'The human mortals *chant*,—their Winter here;'—STAUNTON: 'Want,' in this passage, does not appear to mean *need, lack, wish for*, &c., but to be used in the sense of *be without*. The human mortals are *without* their winter here. It occurs, with the same meaning, in a well-known passage in *Macb.* III, vi: 'Men must not

No night is now with hymne or caroll bleſt; 106
Therefore the Moone (the gouerneſſe of floods)
Pale in her anger, waſhes all the aire;
That Rheumaticke diſeaſes doe abound. 109

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walk too late Who cannot *want* the thought,' &c.—KEIGHTLEY (*Exp.* 131): I should prefer *summer* for 'winter,' for in Dr Forman's *Diary* of the year 1594—which year Shakespeare had certainly in view—we read: 'This monethes of June and July were very wet and wonderfull cold, like winter, that the 10 dae of Julii many did syt by the fyer, yt was so cold; and soe was it in Maye and June; and scarse too fair dais together all that tyme, but it rayned every day more or lesse. Yf it did not raine then was it cold and cloudye. . . . There were many gret fludes this sommer.' It is possible, however, that the error may lie in 'want,' for which we might read *have*, or some such word.—HUDSON (ed. ii): 'Want their winter here' cannot possibly be right; it gives a sense all out of harmony with the context. I think the next line naturally points out *minstrelsy* as the right correction. [And so Hudson's text reads.]—DYCE (ed. ii): 'Heere' is proved to be nonsense by the attempts to explain it. [This puzzling line R. G. White, in his first edition, pronounces 'unless greatly corrupted, one of the most obscure and unsatisfactory in all Shakespeare's works.' Whether 'want' mean *to lack*, or *to desire*, or *to be without*, it cannot be satisfactorily interpreted in connection with 'here' in the sense of time. 'Here' and now, while Titania is talking, is either April or midsummer, and although at this season in the course of nature winter is assuredly *lacking*, it is erroneous to suppose that human mortals are now *desiring* its presence; in fact, it is because there are signs of winter at midsummer that the world is mazed. The only solution which I can find is to take 'here,' not in the sense of time, but of place. Here in Warwickshire, says Titania, in effect (for of course she and Oberon are in the Forest of Arden, with never a thought of Athens; whoever heard of the nine mens morris on the slopes of Pentelicus?), 'here the poor human mortals have no summer with its sports, and now they have had no winter with its hymns and carols.' With this interpretation of 'here,' which Capell was the first to suggest, and whose words, 'in this country,' seem to have been overlooked by recent editors, the line scarcely needs emendation.—ED.]

107. **Therefore**] To JOHNSON this passage 'remained unintelligible,' most probably because he misinterpreted, I think, this 'therefore.' He says, 'Men find no winter, therefore they sing no hymns, the moon provoked by this omission alters the seasons: That is, the alteration of the seasons produces the alteration of the seasons.' —MALONE points out that there is a succession of 'therefores,' all pointing to the fairy quarrel as the cause of the war of the elements: '*Therefore* the winds,' &c.; 'the ox hath *therefore*,' &c., and the present line, which is not logically connected with the omission of hymns and carols.

108. **Pale**] Because it can shine but dimly through the contagious fogs.—ED.

109. **Rheumaticke**] Again used with the accent on the first syllable in *Ven. and Ad.* 135.—MALONE: Rheumatic diseases signified, in Shakespeare's time, not what we now call rheumatism, but distillations from the head, catarrhs, &c. So, in the *Sydney Memorials*, i, 94 (1567), we find: 'he hath verie much distemporid divers parts of his bodie; as namelie, his hedde, his stomack, &c. And therby is always subject to distillacions, coughes, and other rumatick diseases.—W. A. WRIGHT adds that it would be 'more correct to say that the term included all this in addition to

And through this diſtemperature, we ſee
The ſeaſons alter ; hoared headed froſts
Fall in the freſh lap of the crimſon Roſe,
And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icie crowne,

110. *through*] *thorough* $Q_1F_2F_3$, Rowe ii et seq.
111. *hoared headed*] Q_2. *hoared--headed* F_2. *hoary-headed* F_3. *hoary headed* Q_1F_4 et cet.
113. Hyems] *Adam's* Herr.
chinne] *thin* Tyrwhitt, Hal. White, Dyce, Sta. Cam.

what is now understood by it. Cotgrave has "Rumatique: com. Rhewmaticke; troubled with a Rhewme," and he defines "Rume: f. A Rhewme, Catarrhe; Pose, Murre." '—DYCE gives a somewhat different meaning, defining it: 'splenetic, humoursome, peevish,' and cites *2 Hen. IV:* II, iv, 62, 'as rheumatic as two dry toasts,' which JOHNSON explains by 'which cannot meet but they grate one another.'

109, 110. Johnson's suggestion (see note on line 105, *supra*) to transpose these two lines, HUDSON adopts; an emendation as harmless as it is needless, if 'distemperature' refers to the washing of the air by the moon, to which it is quite possible it may refer.—But W. A. WRIGHT, following Malone, says that 'distemperature' refers to the 'disturbance between Oberon and Titania, not to the perturbation of the elements,' and cites *Per.* V, *f*, 27: 'Upon what ground is his distemperature?' 'where it is used of the disturbance of mind caused by grief. Again, *Rom. and Jul.* II, iii, 40: "Thou art uproused by some distemperature." ' On the other hand, SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) gives an example from *1 Hen. IV:* V, i, 3, quite parallel to the present line, where 'distemperature' refers not to mental, but to physical disturbance: 'how bloodily the sun begins to peer above yon bosky hill! the day looks pale at his distemperature.' It must be confessed that the reiterated reference to a personal quarrel between atomies as the cause of elemental and planetary disturbances is in accord with the whole passage and to be preferred; but at the same time it cannot be denied that the 'Therefore' in line 107 may contain a sufficient reference to the fairy brawl, and that 'distemperature' may mean the anger of the moon.—ED.

110. **through**] See II, i, 5.

113. **chinne**] The earliest critic who, in print, suggested *chill* is GREY (i, 49, 1754,), but in 1729 THEOBALD wrote to WARBURTON (Nichols, *Lit. Hist.* ii, 232): 'it staggered me to hear of a chaplet or garland on the "chin." I therefore conjectured it should be "*chill* and icy crown." But upon looking into Paschalius *de Coronis*, I find many instances of the ancients having chaplets on their necks, as well as temples; so that, if we may suppose Hyem is represented here as an old man bending his chin towards his breast, then a chaplet round his neck may properly enough be said to be on his chin. So I am much in doubt about my first conjecture.'—To CAPELL also (*Notes*, p. 104) the same emendation occurred independently, and he, too, was restrained from adopting it in his text by his classical knowledge; he had a 'distant remembrance of the *incana barba* of a Silenus, or some such person, having a "chaplet" put on it by nymphs that are playing with him.'—In support of the text, however, or rather in what they considered support of the text, WESTON and MALONE adduced passages from Virgil (*Æneid*, iv, 253) and Golding's *Ovid* (Seconde Booke, p. 15) which have no parallelism with the present phrase, but contain merely a description of Winter with his 'hoarie beard' and 'snowie frozen crown.'—It was reserved for TYRWHITT to suggest an emendation which has been since adopte

An odorous Chaplet of ſweet Sommer buds
Is as in mockry ſet. The Spring, the Sommer,
The childing Autumne, angry Winter change

116. *childing*] *chiding* F_4, Pope, Han. Cap. *chilling* or *churlish* Herr.

by many of the ablest editors; he remarked 'I should rather be for *thin*, i. e. thin-haired.'—In support, STEEVENS cites *Lear*, IV, vii, 36: 'To watch—poor perdu!—With this thin helm;' and *Rich. II.* III, ii, 112: 'White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps Against thy majesty.'—And W. A. WRIGHT adds *Timon*, IV, iii, 144: 'Thatch your poor thin roofs With burthens of the dead.'—DYCE (*Remarks*, p. 46), after giving in full the citations of Weston and Malone just mentioned, observes: 'Now, in good truth, there is not the slightest resemblance between these two quotations and the absurdity which they are adduced to illustrate and defend. When Virgil describes Atlas with rivers streaming from his chin, and when Ovid paints Winter with icicles dangling on his beard and crown, we have such pictures pre sented to us as the imagination not unwillingly receives; but *Hyems with a chaplet of summer buds on his* CHIN is a grotesque which must surely startle even the dullest reader.'—In deference to Dyce's opinion, HALLIWELL adopted *thin* in his text, but confesses that he is 'not quite convinced that "chin" is incorrect,' 'the author evidently intended a grotesque contrast,—"is, *as in mockery*, set;" the proper appendage being ice.'—'What was a chaplet doing on old Hyems's "*chin*"?' asks R. G. WHITE, 'How did it get there? and when it got there, how did it stay?'—Lastly, WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 275) in an Article on the confusion of *c* and *t*, pronounces *thin* clearly right. [I cannot but think that there is some slight corroboration of Tyrwhitt's emendation in the use of the word 'chaplet,' which is almost restricted to the head. Would not the word have been *garland* had it been meant to have the summer buds about old Hyems's neck and resting in mockery on his chin or beard?—ED.]

116. **childing**] STEEVENS: This is the *frugifer autumnus*.—HOLT WHITE: Thus in Fairfax's *Tasso*, xviii, 26: 'An hundreth plants beside (euen in his sight) Childed an hundreth nymphes, so great, so dight.' *Childing* is an old term in botany, when a small flower grows out of a large one; 'the childing autumn' therefore means the autumn which unseasonably produces flowers on those of summer.—W. A. WRIGHT: It means the autumn which seasonably produces its own fruits. It is the change of seasons which makes it abnormal.—KNIGHT: 'The childing autumn' is the '*teeming* autumn' of our poet's 97th *Sonnet*.—ABBOTT, § 290: That is, autumn producing fruits as it were children.—J. B. NOYES (*Poet-Lore*, p. 531, Oct. 1892): No passage has yet been produced from any writer to justify the definition of 'childing' as *fruitful*, and it is presumed that none fairly can be. I believe the word 'childing' to be a corrupt spelling of the ignorant compositor, a vulgar and strong form of the true reading *chilling*. [See HERR'S conj., Text. Notes.] Edward Coote, in *The English Schoole-Master*, p. 19, 1624, 15th ed., writes: 'But it is both unusual and needlesse to write *bibbl* and *childd*, to make them differ from *bible* and *child*.' It therefore seems extremely probable that 'childing' or *childding* is simply a corrupt spelling of *chilling*, formed in the same manner as 'oilde' from 'oile' [where?—ED.], and 'beholds' from *behowls*, which corrupt spellings are found in the Folio text of this play. A passage from Greene's *Orpharion*, 1599, p. 20 [p. 37, ed. Grosart], would seem to dispel any lingering doubt as to the proposed emendation: 'for the childing colde of Winter, makes the Sommers Sun more pleasant.'—[In his *Glossarial*

Their wonted Liueries, and the mazed world, 117
By their increaſe, now knowes not which is which;
And this ſame progeny of euills,
Comes from our debate, from our diſſention, 120
We are their parents and originall.
Ober. Do you amend it then, it lies in you, 122

117. *mazed*] *amazed* F_3F_4, Rowe+. '*mazed* Johns. Steev. Mal. Sing. ii, Ktly.
118. *increaſe*] *inverse* Han. *inchase* Warb. *encrease* Cap.
119, 120. *And... Comes*] One line, Ff et seq. *And...evil comes* F_4, Rowe+.

Index, GROSART anticipates Noyes in the correction of 'childing' to *chilling* in this passage from Greene.—In MURRAY'S *N. E. Dict.* there are the following citations, in addition to the present passage, in support of the meaning *fertile, fruitful*, and also of the botanical meaning of 'childing,' noted by Holt White: '1609, HEYWOOD, *Brit. Troy*, V, xix, 111, By him (Saturn) . . . Childing Tellus beares. 1636, GERARD'S *Herbal*, II, cciii, 635, Another pretty double daisie, which . . . puts forth many foot-stalkes carrying also little double floures . . . whence they haue fitly termed it the childing Daisie. 1688, R. HOLME, *Armoury*, II, 64/2: The Childing Pink groweth . . . on upright stalks. 1776, WITHERING, *Bot. Arrangem.* (1830), II, 539: *Dianthus prolifer*, Childing or Proliferous Pink. 1879, PRIOR, *Plant-n.*, Childing Cudweed, *Gnaphalium germanicum*.' Surely the text of the Folio may stand. From time immemorial Autumn has been symbolised by harvests and by fruits. If there be any virtue in illustrating Shakespeare by himself, we cannot overlook the parallel passage cited by Knight: 'The teeming autumn, big with rich increase, Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime.' In each of my three copies of F_4 'childing' is spelled *chiding*, yet it would be unsafe to assert that this is the reading in all copies. Neither CAPELL nor the CAMBRIDGE EDITOR makes any mention of it, but both credit it to Pope. Capell adopted it in his text, and justifies it in his notes by saying that he could not see 'how the epithet "angry" could well have presented itself to the poet, if "chiding" had not preceded.'—R. G. WHITE supposed that the change was original with him. 'I am so sure,' he says (ed. i), 'that "childing" is a misprint for *chiding* (in allusion to the lowering skies and harsh winds of Autumn, as the next epithet figures the increased inclemency of Winter,) . . . that I wonder that the suggestion has not been made before.'—ED.]

117. **mazed**] That is, confused, bewildered; it is not an abbreviation for *amazed*, as it is sometimes printed in modern editions. See Text. Notes.

118. **increase**] Warburton's substitution *inchase* is unintelligible without his explanation that it refers to the temperature in which the seasons are *set* or *inchased* like jewels.—Whereupon HEATH (p. 47) observes, none too strongly, that 'a season set in a warm or cold temperature borders very nearly upon downright nonsense.' 'If [Warburton] had recollected the Psalm he every day repeats in the evening service of the Common Prayer, he would have found that "increase" signifies product, growth.' 'The seasons had so changed their wonted liveries that it was no longer possible to distinguish them one from another by their products.'

119. **progeny of euills**] For contemporary references to these meteorological disturbances, see Appendix, *Date of Composition*.

Why ſhould *Titania* croſſe her *Oberon*? 123
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my Henchman. 125
Qu. Set your heart at reſt,
The Fairy land buyes not the childe of me,
His mother was a Votreſſe of my Order,
And in the ſpiced *Indian* aire, by night
Full often hath ſhe goſſipt by my ſide, 130
And ſat with me on *Neptunes* yellow ſands,
Marking th'embarked traders on the flood,
When we haue laught to ſee the ſailes conceiue,
And grow big bellied with the wanton winde:
Which ſhe with pretty and with ſwimming gate, 135
Following (her wombe then rich with my yong ſquire)

123. Oberon] Orberon F_4.
128. *Votreſſe*] *votaress* Dyce, Coll. ii, Cam.
130. *hath ſhe*] *ſhe hath* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
131. *And ſat*] *And ſat*, Q_2.
132. *on the*] *of the* F_3F_4, Rowe, Pope, Han.
133. *we haue*] *we* F_3F_4.
135. *gate*] *gait* Cap. et seq.
136. *Following (her...ſquire)*] *Follying (her...squire)* Warb. Theob. Han. (*Following her. ...squire*) Kenrick, Farmer, Steev. Rann. Mal. *Following her womb, ...squire*, Hal. White i (subs.). *Following her womb...squire.*— White ii.

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124. In this contest over a boy, BELL (ii, 207) detects the contest of Jupiter over Hercules.

125. **Henchman**] The meaning of this word is given as concisely as may be in Sherwood's *French-English Dictionary*, appended to Cotgrave: 'A hench-man, or hench boy. Page d'honneur; qui marche devant quelque Seigneur de grand authoritie.' Its derivation is still somewhat in doubt. SKEAT derives it from *hengst-man*, horse-man, groom; Anglosaxon *hengest* = horse. For a prolonged discussion wherein many examples are cited, one as early as 1415, see *Notes and Queries*, 8th Ser. III, 478, 1893, where references are given to all the preceding communications in that periodical. HALLIWELL devotes more than two folio pages, with a wood-cut, to the elucidation of the word; but for all purposes of present illustration, Sherwood's definition appears to be ample.—ED.

127. **The Fairy land**] COLLIER (ed. ii): The MS has *Thy;* and as Titania afterwards speaks to Oberon of '*thy* fairy kingdom,' it is probably right. [If improvement be justifiable, this trivial emendation is harmless.—ED.]

135. **swimming**] Of course this refers to a gliding motion on or in the water; at the same time, it is well to remember that to Elizabethan ears there may have been here the suggestion of a graceful dance. That there was a step in dancing called *the swim* we know, but of its style we are ignorant. DANIEL (see note, *As You Like It*, V, iv, 73, of this ed.) collected references to this dance from Beau. & Fl., Massinger, and Steele; ELZE added another from Chapman; to them may be added, from Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*: '*Moria.* You wanted the swim in the turn. *Philautia.* Nay, ... the swim and the trip are properly mine; everybody will affirm it that has any

Would imitate, and faile vpon the Land,
To fetch me trifles, and returne againe,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.
But ſhe being mortall, of that boy did die,
And for her ſake I do reare vp her boy,
And for her ſake I will not part with him.
Ob. How long within this wood intend you ſtay?
Qu. Perchance till after *Theſeus* wedding day.
If you will patiently dance in our Round,
And ſee our Moone-light reuels, goe with vs;
If not, ſhun me and I will ſpare your haunts.
Ob. Giue me that boy, and I will goe with thee.
Qu. Not for thy Fairy Kingdome. Fairies away:

139. *rich with*] *ripe with* Coll. MS. *merchandize*] *marchandiſe* Q_1.
141. *I doe*] *doe I* Qq, Cap. Mal.'90, Sta. Cam. White ii.
144. Theſeus] *Theseus's* Rowe i. *Theseus'* Rowe ii et seq.
149. *Fairies*] *Elves* Pope+.

judgement in dancing.'—II, i, p. 270, ed. Gifford, 1816. Unfortunately, Gifford has no note on it.—ED.

136. **Following**] WARBURTON'S emendations, not unfrequently, as in the present instance, composed of words coined by himself, need explanation; a bare record in the Text. Notes is almost unintelligible. 'Following' he changes to *follying*, and says it means 'wantoning in sport and gaiety,'—HEATH rightly explained that the little mother 'followed on the land the ship which sailed on the water, . . . and that she continued following it for some time, . . . and would then pick up a few trifles, and "return again, As from a voyage, rich with merchandise."' Bad as is WARBURTON'S change, which, by the way, Dr JOHNSON pronounced 'very ingenious,' it is to me preferable to KENRICK'S repulsive punctuation (*Rev.* p. 19). He removes the excellent parentheses of the Folio, and puts a comma after 'wombe'; having thus coarsened Titania's sweet picture and degraded her words to the slang level of 'following one's nose,' he complacently adds: 'this is the method a critic should take with the poets. Trace out their images, and you will soon find how they expressed themselves.' It is to be regretted that Kenrick has, substantially, so good a following; it is incomprehensible that LETTSOM (ap. Dyce, ed. ii) should say he was right.—ED.

137. **imitate**] C. C. HENSE (*Sh.'s Sommernachtstraum Erläutert*, 1851, p. 7): Shakespeare's fairies delight in whatsoever is comic, hence it is thoroughly characteristic that Titania in recalling the loveliness of her friend should dwell with fondest recollection on the laughter called forth by the imitation of the embark'd traders.

143. **stay**] For other examples of the omission *to* before the infinitive, see ABBOTT, § 349.

145. **Round**] HALLIWELL: '*Orbis saltatorius*, the round danse, or the dansing of the rounds.'—*Nomenclator*, 1585. So in Elyot's *Boke of the Governour*, 1537: 'In stede of these we haue nowe base dauncis, bargenettes, pauions, turgions, and roundes' [i, 230, ed. Croft]. The round was, in fact, what is now called the country-dance.

149. **Fairy**] 'By the advice of Dr Farmer,' STEEVENS 'omitted this useless adjec-

We ſhall chide downe right, if I longer ſtay. *Exeunt.*
Ob. Wel, go thy way: thou ſhalt not from this groue,
Till I torment thee for this iniury.
My gentle *Pucke* come hither ; thou remembreſt
Since once I ſat vpon a promontory,

153. *remembreſt*] *rememberest* Cam.
154. *Since once I*] *Since I* Ff. *Since that I* Rowe. *Since I once* Coll. MS ap. Cam.

tive as it spoils the metre.' And then, can it be believed? pronounced the following 'Fairies' as a trisyllable!—ED.

152. iniury] W. A. WRIGHT: This word has here something of the meaning of insult, and not of wrong only. Compare III, ii, 153, and the adjective 'injurious' in the sense of 'insulting, insolent' in III, ii, 202. In the Authorised Version of *1 Timothy* i, 13, 'injurious' is the rendering of ὑβριστής.

153–175. For notes on this passage, see p. 75.

154. Since] For other examples of the use of 'since' for *when*, see ABBOTT, § 132, where it is said that this meaning arises from the 'omission of "it is" in such phrases as "it is long *since* I saw you," when condensed into "long *since*, I saw you." Thus *since* acquires the meaning of "ago," "in past time," adverbially, and hence is used conjunctively for "when, long ago."'—VERITY gives a refined analysis of this usage: '"Since" is used by Shakespeare as equivalent to *when* only after verbs denoting recollection. Perhaps this use comes from the meaning *ever since;* if you recollect a thing *ever since* it occurred, you must recollect *when* it occurred.' In *2 Hen. VI:* III, i, 9, the Queen says, 'We know the time since he was mild and affable'; at first sight, the use of 'since' appears here to disprove Verity's rule, but in reality it conforms to it. In 'we know the time' there is involved the idea of recollection.—ED.

154. Since once I sat, &c.] DELIUS (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, vol. xii, p. 1, 1877) has collected examples of what he 'ventures to term' 'the epic element' in Shakespeare's dramas. By this 'epic element' is meant those passages where the poet, through the mouth of one of his characters, lets those circumstances be narrated or described which might have been presented scenically. It is needless to call attention to the important bearing of this subject on Shakespeare's dramatic art. Of the present play Delius says (p. 4): The previous quarrel between Oberon and Titania, which has such disastrous consequences for all nature and for mankind, Shakespeare describes at length through the mouths of the Fairy King and Queen themselves; just as he had shortly before made the roguish Puck boast of his own knavish tricks in order to prepare the audience for those tricks which he was afterwards to play in the drama. A third descriptive or epic element is in the present passage, where Oberon describes the magic properties of the little western flower. Be the meaning of this much-vexed passage what it may, this much is certain, that a visible scenic representation of it was precluded by the meagre theatrical resources of the day; and yet so essential to the developement of the action is this magic flower that a picture of it must be drawn as vividly and as visibly as possible before the mind's eye. And here it is where Shakespeare has completely succeeded. While listening in the theatre to Oberon's words the spectators *saw* Oberon himself on the promontory. With Oberon's eyes they *saw* Cupid's love-shaft miss the fair vestal throned by the west, and fall upon the little

And heard a Meare-maide on a Dolphins backe,
Vttering ſuch dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude ſea grew ciuill at her ſong,
And certaine ſtarres ſhot madly from their Spheares,
To heare the Sea-maids muſicke.
Puc. I remember.
Ob. That very time I ſay (but thou couldſt not)
Flying betweene the cold Moone and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd; a certaine aime he tooke

155. *Meare-maide*] *mermaid* Rowe.
156. *harmonious*] *hermonious* Q_1.
158. *Spheares*] *Shpeares* F_3.
161. *I ſay*] *I ſaw* Q_1, Rowe et seq.
163. *all arm'd*] *alarm'd* Warb. Theob. *all-arm'd* Johns.

flower before milk-white, now purple with love's wound. They *saw* the siren, as a contrast to the invulnerable chastity of that vestal, control the sea with her seductive songs, and entice the stars, maddened with love, from their spheres. [If the spectators saw this, did they see what Shakespeare intended? Delius speaks of a 'siren'; a mermaid was not necessarily a 'siren,' nor is 'dulcet and harmonious breath' necessarily 'seductive.' Moreover, does not Delius overshoot the mark when he represents Shakespeare as resorting to the epic element here, not from artistic reasons, but because of the poverty of his stage? Delius's Essay has been translated in the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, Part ii, pp. 207, 232.—ED.]

158. **certaine**] W. A. WRIGHT: Here used of an indefinite number, as in *Temp.* V, i, 53: 'I'll break my staff, Bury it certain fathoms in the earth.' [This interpretation is, of course, allowable, but I am by no means sure that there is not an added beauty in taking 'certain' in the meaning of *sure, fixed;* does it not heighten the power of the mermaid's song, that it could bring down the very stars, fixed in the sky. Schmidt (*Lex.*) furnishes a parallel example from the *R. of L.* where the skies were sorry at the burning of Ilion, 'And little stars shot from their fixed places.'—l. 1525. That this interpretation is hostile to the theory that the 'certain stars' were the Duke of Norfolk and the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, is possibly an additional reason why it should be preferred.—ED.]

157. Prof. A. S. COOK (*Academy*, 30 Nov. 1889) calls attention to the parallelism of this line to the description, in the Sixth Canto of the *Orlando*, of 'una Sirena Che col suo dolce canto accheta il mare.'

158. **Spheares**] See note on 'moon's sphere' in line 7 of this scene.

163. **all arm'd**] WARBURTON, on the supposition that the beauty of the passage would be heightened if Cupid were represented as frightened at the Queen's declaration for a single life, changed this to *alarm'd*, and Dr JOHNSON gravely defended the original text, and explained that 'it does not signify dressed in panoply.' Earlier than Johnson, however, GREY (i, 52) had rightly remarked that 'all arm'd' means nothing more 'than being arm'd with bow and quiver, the proper and classical arms of Cupid, which yet he sometimes feigned to lay aside.'—And CAPELL, too, came to the rescue of a phrase that would have needed no comment had not the perverse and ingenious Warburton given it a twist, whereof the effects have more or less endured until now.—W. A. WRIGHT observes that 'all' is merely emphatic,—'not in full armour, but with all his usual weapons.'

At a faire Veſtall, throned by the Weſt,
And loos'd his loue-ſhaft ſmartly from his bow,
As it ſhould pierce a hundred thouſand hearts,
But I might ſee young *Cupids* fiery ſhaft
Quencht in the chaſte beames of the watry Moone;
And the imperiall Votreſſe paſſed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy free.
Yet markt I where the bolt of *Cupid* fell.
It fell vpon a little weſterne flower;
Before, milke-white; now purple with loues wound,
And maidens call it, Loue in idleneſſe.

164. *by the*] *by* Qq.
166. *ſhould*] *would* F_4, Rowe i.
168. *Quencht*] *Quench* F_3F_4.
169. *Votreſſe*] *votaress* Knt, Coll. Dyce, Sta. Cam. White ii.
170. *fancy free*] *fancy-free* Ff et seq.

164. **by**] For other examples of a similar use of 'by,' see ABBOTT, § 145.

165. **loos'd**] DYCE: The technical term in archery. See Puttenham's *Arte of Poesie*, 1589, p. 145: 'th' Archer's terme, who is not said to finish the feate of his shot before he give the loose, and deliuer his arrow from his bow.' Compare, in the excellent old ballad of *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly*, 'They loused theyr arowes bothe at ones.'—[Child's *Eng. and Scot. Popular Ballads*, V, 26.]

166. **As**] For other instances where 'as' is equivalent to *as if*, see ABBOTT, § 107; and see § 312 for examples of 'might,' in the next line, used in the sense of *was able, could*.

170. **fancy free**] STEEVENS: That is, exempt from the power of love.

173. **Before, milke-white**] HUNTER (i, 293): The change of the flower from white to purple was evidently suggested by the change of the mulberry in Ovid's story of Pyramus. HALLIWELL: Shakespeare was so minute an observer of nature, it is possible there is here an allusion to the changes which take place in the colours of plants arising from solar light and the character of the soil. [Lyte, in his *Nievve Herball*, 1578, p. 147, speaking of the different kinds of violets (and Love-in-idleness is the *viola tricolor*, see next note), says: 'There is also a thirde kinde, bearing floures as white as snow. And also a fourth kinde (but not very common), whose floures be of a darke Crymsen, or old reddish purple colour, in all other poyntes like to the first, as in leaues, seede, and growing.' If any appeal to Botany be needed, which I doubt, we appear to have here a sufficing response.—ED.]

174. **Loue in idlenesse**] In his Part II, chap. ii, *Of Pances or Hartes ease*, Lyte says: 'This floure is called . . . in Latine . . . Viola tricolor, Herba Trinitatis, Iacea, and Herba Clauellata: in English Pances, Loue in idlenes, and Hartes ease' (p. 149, ed. 1578). W. A. WRIGHT quotes Gerard (*Herball*, p. 705, ed. 1597) as calling the flower 'Harts ease, Pansies, Liue in Idlenes, Cull me to you, and three faces in one hood.'—ELLACOMBE (p. 151) has added from Dr Prior more common names, such as: 'Herb Trinity, Fancy, Flamy, Kiss me, Cull me or Cuddle me to you, Tickle my fancy, Kiss me ere I rise, Jump up and kiss me, Kiss me at the garden gate, Pink of my John, &c.' I think the commonest name in this country is Johnny-jump-up.—ED.

Fetch me that flower ; the hearb I ſhew'd thee once, 175

175. *ſhew'd*] *ſhewed* Q_1.

153–175. **My gentle Pucke . . . that flower**] This speech of Oberon has been the subject of more voluminous speculation than any other twenty-five lines in Shakespeare. Perhaps not unnaturally. Let an allegory be once scented and the divagations are endless. That there is an allegory here has been noted from the days of Rowe, but how far it extended and what its limitations and its meanings have since then proved prolific themes. According to Rowe, it amounted to no more than a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, and this is the single point on which all critics since his day are agreed. In his *Life of Shakespear* (p. viii, 1709) ROWE says that 'Queen Elizabeth had several of [Shakespear's] plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour. It is that maiden Princess, plainly, whom he intends by a "fair vestal throned by the West"; and that whole passage is a Compliment very properly brought in, and very handsomly apply'd to her.' The next advance was made by Warburton, and however unwilling we may be to accept instruction from his dogmatic lips, and however much he may have been derided and mangled by Ritson, it still remains that his interpretation has been accepted by one, at least, of the able critics of our day.—'The first thing,' says WARBURTON, 'observable in these words [the first seven lines of Oberon's speech] is that this action of the *Mermaid* is laid in the same time and place with Cupid's attack upon the *vestal*. By the vestal every one knows is meant Queen Elizabeth. It is very natural and reasonable then to think that the Mermaid stands for some eminent personage of her time. And if so, the allegorical covering, in which there is a mixture of satire and panegyric, will lead us to conclude that this person was one of whom it had been inconvenient for the author to speak openly, either in praise or dispraise. All this agrees with Mary Queen of Scots, and with no other. Queen Elizabeth could not bear to hear her commended; and her successor would not forgive her satirist. But the poet has so well marked out every distinguished circumstance of her life and character in this beautiful allegory, as will leave no room to doubt about his secret meaning. She is called a *Mermaid*—1, to denote her reign over a kingdom situate in the sea, and 2, her beauty and intemperate lust, "Ut turpiter atrum Desinat in piscem mulier formosa supernè," for as Elizabeth, for her chastity, is called a *Vestal*, this unfortunate lady, on a contrary account, is called a *Mermaid*. 3. An ancient story may be supposed to be here alluded to. The emperor Julian tells us, *Epistle* 41, that the Sirens (which, with all the modern poets, are mermaids) contended for precedency with the Muses, who, overcoming them, took away their wings. The quarrels between Mary and Elizabeth had the same cause and the same issue.

'"On a dolphin's back": This evidently marks out that distinguishing circumstance of Mary's fortune, her marriage with the Dauphin of France, son of Henry II.

'"Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath": This alludes to her great abilities of genius and learning, which rendered her the most accomplished Princess of her age. . . .

'"That the rude sea grew civill at her song": By "rude sea" is meant Scotland encircled with the ocean; which rose up in arms against the Regent, while she was in France. But her return home presently quieted those disorders. . . . There is the greater justness and beauty in this image, as the vulgar opinion is, that the mermaid always sings in storms.

'"And certaine starres shot madly from their spheares, To heare the Sea-maids

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musicke": Thus concludes the description, with that remarkable circumstance of this unhappy lady's fate, the destruction she brought upon several of the English nobility, whom she drew in to support her cause. This, in the boldest expression of the sublime, the poet images by *certain stars shooting madly from their spheres*. By which he meant the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who fell in her quarrel; and principally the great duke of Norfolk, whose projected marriage with her was attended with such fatal consequences. Here, again, the reader may observe a peculiar justness in the imagery. The vulgar opinion being that the mermaid allured men to destruction by her songs. . . . On the whole, it is the noblest and justest allegory that was ever written. The laying it in *fairy land*, and out of nature, is in the character of the speaker. And on these occasions Shakespeare always excels himself.'

This interpretation of the 'noblest and justest allegory' (Warburton's innocent way of praising his own ingenuity) was accepted for forty years, and duly appeared in each succeeding edition of the *Variorum* down to 'Steevens's Own,' in 1793, when that editor found he could not 'dissemble his doubts concerning it.' 'Why,' he asks, 'is the *thrice-married* Queen of Scotland styled a Sea-*maid?* and is it probable that Shakespeare (who understood his own political as well as poetical interest) should have ventured such a panegyric on this ill-fated Princess during the reign of her rival, Elizabeth? If it was unintelligible to his audience, it was thrown away; if obvious, there was danger of offence to her majesty. . . . To these remarks may be added those of a like tendency which I met with in *The Edinburgh Magazine*, Nov. 1786: "That a complement to Queen Elizabeth was intended in the expression of the 'fair Vestal throned in the West' seems to be generally allowed; but how far Shakespeare designed, under the image of the mermaid, to figure Mary, Queen of Scots, is more doubtful. If by the 'rude sea grew civil at her song' is meant, as Dr Warburton supposes, that the tumults of Scotland were appeased by her address, the observation is not true; for that *sea* was in a storm during the whole of Mary's reign. Neither is the figure just, if by the 'stars shooting madly from their spheres' the poet alluded to the fate of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and particularly of the Duke of Norfolk, whose projected marriage with Mary was the occasion of his ruin. It would have been absurd and irreconcileable to the good sense of the poet to have represented a nobleman *aspiring* to marry a queen, by the image of a star *shooting* or *descending* from its sphere."'

The doubts merely hinted at by Steevens become withering sneers from RITSON. 'I shall not dispute,' says he, 'that by "the fair vestal" Shakspeare intended a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, who, I am willing to believe, at the age of sixty-eight, was no less chaste than beautiful; but whether any other part of Oberon's speech have an allegorical meaning or not, I presume, in direct opposition to Dr Warburton, to contend that it agrees with any other rather than with Mary, Queen of Scots. The "mixture of satire and panegyric" I shall examine anon. I only wish to know, for the present, why it should have been "inconvenient for the author to speak openly" in "dispraise" of the Scottish queen. If he meant to please "the imperial votress," no incense could have been half so grateful as the blackest calumny. But, it seems, "her successor would not forgive her satirist." Who then was her "successor" when this play was written? Mary's son, James? I am persuaded that, had Dr Warburton been better read in the history of those times, he would not have found this monarch's succession quite so certain, at that period, as to have prevented Shakspeare, who was by no means the refined speculatist he would induce one to suppose, from

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gratifying the "fair vestal" with sentiments so agreeable to her. However, if "the poet has so well marked out every distinguishing circumstance of her life and character, in this beautiful allegory, as will leave no room to doubt about his secret meaning," there is an end of all controversy. For, though the satire would be cowardly, false, and infamous, yet, since it was couched under an allegory, which, while perspicuous as glass to Elizabeth, would have become opake as a mill-stone to her successor, Shakspeare, lying as snug as his own Ariel in a cowslip's bell, would have had no reason to apprehend any ill consequences from it. Now, though our speculative bard might not be able to foresee the sagacity of the Scotish king in smelling out a plot, as I believe it was some years after that he gave any proof of his excellence that way, he could not but have heard of his being an admirable witch-finder, and, surely, the skill requisite to detect a witch must be sufficient to develope an allegory; so that I must needs question the propriety of the compliment here paid to the poet's prudence. Queen Mary "is called a *Mermaid*—1, to denote her reign over a kingdom situate in the sea." In that respect, at least, Elizabeth was as much a mermaid as herself. "And 2, her beauty and intemperate lust; for as Elizabeth, for her chastity, is called a Vestal, this unfortunate lady, on a contrary account, is called a *mermaid*." All this is as false as it is foolish: The mermaid was never the emblem of lust; nor was the "gentle Shakspeare" of a character or disposition to have insulted the memory of a murdered princess by so infamous a charge. The most abandoned libeller, even Buchanan himself, never accused her of "intemperate lust"; and it is pretty well understood at present that, if either of these ladies were remarkable for her purity, it was *not* Queen Elizabeth. "3. An ancient story may be supposed to be here alluded to: the Emperor Julian tells us that the *Sirens* (which, with all the modern poets, are *mermaids*) contended for precedency with the Muses, who, overcoming them, took away their wings." Can anything be more ridiculous? *Mermaids* are half women and half *fishes*: where then are their wings? or what possible use could they make of them if they had any? The *Sirens* which Julian speaks of were partly women and partly *birds*; so that "the pollusion," as good-man Dull hath it, by no means "holds in the exchange." [Florio gives: 'Sirena, *a Syren, a Mermaide*,' and Cotgrave: 'Serene: f. *A Syren, or Mermaid*.' Hence it seems that the words were to a certain extent interchangeable in Shakespeare's day, and Ritson's sneers in this regard must be tempered.] "The quarrels between Mary and Elizabeth had the same cause and the same issue." That is, they contended for precedency, and Elizabeth, overcoming, took away the other's *wings*. The secret of their contest for precedency should seem to have been confined to Dr Warburton. It would be in vain to enquire after it in the history of the time. The Queen of Scots, indeed, flew for refuge to her treacherous rival (who is here again the mermaid of the allegory, alluring to destruction, by her songs or fair speeches, and wearing, it should seem, like a cherubim, her wings on her neck), Elizabeth, who was determined she should fly no more, and in her eagerness to tear them away, happened, inadvertently, to take off her head. The situation of the poet's mermaid, *on a dolphin's back*, "evidently marks out that distinguishing circumstance in Mary's fortune, her marriage with the dauphin of France." A mermaid would seem to have but a strangely aukward seat on the back of a dolphin, but that, to be sure, is the poet's affair, and not the commentator's; the latter, however, is certainly answerable for placing a Queen on the back of her husband—a very extraordinary situation, one would think, for a married lady; and of which I only recollect a single instance, in the common print, of "a poor man

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loaded with mischief." Mermaids are supposed to sing, but their *dulcet and harmonious breath* must, in this instance, to suit the allegory, allude to "those great abilities of genius and learning," which rendered Queen Mary "the most accomplished princess of her age." This compliment could not fail of being highly agreeable to the "fair Vestal." "By the rude sea is meant Scotland *incircled with the ocean*, which rose up in arms against the regent, while she [Mary] was in France. But her return home quieted these disorders; and had not her strange ill conduct afterwards more violently inflamed them, she might have passed her whole life in peace." Dr Warburton, whose skill in geography seems to match his knowledge of history and acuteness in allegory, must be allowed the sole merit of discovering Scotland to be an *island*. But, as to the disorders of that country being quieted by the Queen's return, it appears from history to be full as peaceable before as it is at any time after that event. Whether, in the revival or continuance of these disorders, she, or her idiot husband, or fanatical subjects, were most to blame, is a point upon which doctors still differ; but, it is evident, that if the enchanting song of the commentator's mermaid civilized the rude sea for a time, it was only to render it, in an instant, more boisterous than ever; those great abilities of genius and learning, which rendered her the most accomplished princess of her age, not availing her among a parcel of ferocious and enthusiastic barbarians, whom even the lyre of Orpheus had in vain warbled to humanize. Brantome, who accompanied her, says she was welcomed home by a mob of five or six hundred ragamuffins, who, in discord, with the most execrable instruments, sung *psalms* (which she was supposed to dislike) under her chamber window: "*He !*" adds he, "*quelle musique et quelle repos pour sa nuit !*" However, it seems "there is great justness and beauty in this image, as the vulgar opinion is that the mermaid always sings in storms." "The vulgar opinion," I am persuaded, is peculiar to the ingenious commentator; as, if the mermaid is ever supposed to sing, it is in *calms* which presage storms. I can perceive no propriety in calling the insurrection of the Northern earls the quarrel of Queen Mary, unless in so far as it was that of the religion she professed. But this, perhaps, is the least objectionable part of a chimerical allegory of which the poet himself had no idea, and which the commentator, to whose creative fancy it owes its existence, seems to have very justly characterised in telling us it is "out of nature"; that is, as I conceive, perfectly groundless and unnatural.'

Warburton may have urged inappropriate reasons for representing Mary as a mermaid, but history, it must be confessed, bears him out so far as to show that she was caricatured under this shape in her own day. In *Notes & Qu.* (3d Ser. V, 338, 1864) W. PINKERTON quotes the following from Strickland's *Queens of Scotland*, V, 231: 'Among other cruel devices practised against Mary at this season by her cowardly assailants was the dissemination of gross personal caricatures; which, like the placards charging her as an accomplice in her husband's murder, were fixed on the doors of churches and other public places in Edinburgh. . . . Mary was peculiarly annoyed at one of these productions, called "The Mermaid," which represented her in the character of a crowned siren, with a sceptre ["formed of a hawk's lure"—Pinkerton], and flanked with the regal initials "M. R." This curious specimen of party malignity is still preserved in the State Paper Office.'

In 1794, WHITER (*A Specimen of a Commentary*, &c. p. 186) gave a wholly new turn to the discussion when he observed that the whole passage 'is very naturally derived from the *Masque* or the *Pageant*, which abounded in the age of Shakespeare; and which would often quicken and enrich the fancy of the poet with wild and orig-

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inal combinations.' To prove that a representation of a dolphin bearing a singer on his back was not uncommon at these spectacles, Whiter cites the anecdote about Harry Goldingham, given by Malone (see III, i, 44), and then concludes: 'In the present example we may perhaps be inclined to suspect that Shakespeare, in this whole description of the mermaid, the dolphin, the vestal, and Cupid, directly alludes to some actual exhibition which contained all these particulars, and which had been purposely contrived and presented before Elizabeth to compliment that princess at the expense of her unfortunate rival. So favorite a representation does the *riding on a dolphin* appear to have been in the time of our poet, that it was sometimes introduced among the quaint devices in the art of cookery,' whereof Whiter cites an example from Jonson's Masque of *Neptune's Triumph*, and from his *Staple of News;* as an illustration that the *sea-maid's music* is to be referred to the same source he cites a passage from Jonson's *Masque*, performed on *Twelfth Night*, 1605.

These examples are eminently useful, I think, as evidence of the small likelihood there is that any one in Shakespeare's audience attached any allegorical significance to Oberon's description, beyond his allusion to the 'fair Vestal throned by the West.'

In 1797, PLUMPTRE (*Appendix to Obs. on Hamlet*, p. 61) feebly answered Ritson's criticisms; for instance, it does not strike him 'as necessary that the Queen should be placed on the *back* of her husband. The word "back" might suggest to the Poet merely the idea of her being united to him, or *backing him*, i. e. their interests strengthening (or seconding, or supporting) each other by their union.' His only contribution to the discussion is his supposition that by 'Cupid's attack upon the Vestal' was meant 'the accomplishments of the Earl of Leicester.'

The pageant which Whiter supposed to have been the groundwork of Oberon's description, BOADEN found, as he believed, in '*The Princelie Pleasures*,' which Leicester devised for the entertainment of the Queen at Kenilworth in 1575, when Shakespeare was a boy. 'Where is the improbability,' he asks (*On the Sonnets*, p. 8, 1837), 'that Shakespeare in his youth should have ventured, under the wing of Greene, his townsman, even to Kenilworth itself? It was but fourteen miles distant from Stratford. Nay, that he should at eleven years of age have personally witnessed the reception of the great Queen by the mighty favourite, and perhaps have even discharged some youthful part in the pageant written by Mr Ferrers, sometime lord of misrule in the Court? Was there nothing about the spectacle likely to linger in one of "imagination all compact," a youth of singular precocity, with a strong devotion to the Muses, and little inclined, as we know, to "drive on the affair of wool at home with his father"? Nay, is there no part of his immortal works which bears *evidence* upon the question of his youthful visit? We should expect to find such graphic record in a composition peculiarly devoted to *Fancy*, and there, if I do not greatly err, we undoubtedly find it.' Boaden hereupon proceeds to show that this 'composition' is the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the 'graphic record' is Shakespeare's description from memory, in this speech of Oberon, of what Gascoigne calls *The Princely Pleasures at Kenilworth Castle*, and, as a corroboration of his interpretation, briefly cites certain passages from Gascoigne and from Laneham's *Letter;* as these passages are given with greater fullness by Halpin, the next commentator, it is not worth while to give their abridgement here. Let it be noted, however, that to Boaden belongs the credit of first calling attention to them. He continues:—

'Shakespeare's impression of the scene was strong and general; he does not write

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as if the tracts of Gascoigne and Laneham lay upon his table. His description is exactly such as, after seventeen years had elapsed, a reminiscence would suggest to a mind highly poetical.' After referring to Leicester as 'Cupid,' 'who then, or never, expected to carry his romantic prize,' and to the Queen as the 'fair vestal,' Boaden concludes:—'But the splendid captivations of Leicester were not disdained by all female minds, and the bolt of Cupid is seldom discharged in vain. Shakespeare has told us where it fell, "upon a little western flower." Why, alas! can we not ask the kindred spirit, Sir Walter Scott, whether he can conceive his own Amy Robsart more beautifully and touchingly figured than she appears to be in this exquisite metaphor?'

Doubtless Sir Walter's 'kindred spirit,' when in the flesh, would have smilingly answered his questioner that no fairer description could be anywhere found of 'his own Amy Robsart,' but that the Earl of Leicester's Amy Robsart had been dead fifteen years when The Princely Pleasures took place at Kenilworth.

The Rev. N. J. HALPIN next takes up the wondrous tale, and in a remarkable Essay, printed by *The Shakespeare Society* (*Oberon's Vision*, &c, 1843), followed Boaden (unwittingly, as he claims) in identifying the scene of Oberon's vision with Leicester's entertainment of Elizabeth at Kenilworth; but he carries the allegory much farther than it had ever been carried before, and finds an explanation for Oberon's every phrase. His one hundred and eight octavo pages must be greatly condensed here.

However refined may be the interpretation, and however sure the elucidation of certain portions of Oberon's speech, one thing, it seems to me, is beyond all allegorical explanation, and that is 'the little western flower'; it is a genuine flower that Oberon wishes, and it is a genuine flower that Puck brings him. Let imagination run riot in a south sea of discovery with regard to every other detail—this little flower is a fact, and its magic properties must be put to use. But Halpin scouts the idea that this little flower is to be taken literally, oblivious of the difficulty into which his theory leads him, when it comes to squeezing this flower on the lover's eyelids.

'It is obvious,' says Halpin, p. 11, 'that throughout the passage under consideration the little flower is the leading object, the principal figure, to whose development all the rest—the mermaid and her dolphin, the music and the stars, Cupid and his quiver, the vestal and her moonbeams—are but accessories; intimating the time, the place, and the occasion, of its investment of its singular properties. The language throughout, with the exception of *the little flower*, is admitted to be allegorical. If this be really the case—if we are to take the little flower in its literal meaning, as a little western flower and "nothing more"—we have then, instead of a poetical beauty, a poetical anomaly, of which it would be difficult to find another example in the whole range of literature—an allegory, to wit, in which all the accessories are allegorical, but the principal figure real and literal! [Does not Halpin here forget that this elaborate allegory in all its accessories is of his own creation?] . . . I therefore infer that our "little western flower" is also an allegorical personage. . . . I conclude also that this personage is a female; not only because the delicate flower is an appropriate image of feminine beauty, but because the shaft levelled at a female bosom penetrates its heart and influences its destinies.' Halpin digresses for short space to explain that 'Dian's bud,' which has power to dispel the charm of the little flower, is Queen Elizabeth; and by way of proof cites a passage from Greene's *Friar Bacon*, where she is styled '*Diana's Rose*.' [Is it not clear, therefore, that when Greene, in acknowledged adulation of the Queen, styles her Diana's *Rose*, that Shakespeare, who had

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no connection with Greene's play, can have no other reference when he too speaks of Diana's *bud?* If we refuse to accept a conclusion like this, there will soon be an end to all Shakespearian explanations.] Halpin disposes of the assumption that the 'little western flower' was Mary, Queen of Scots, by maintaining that, with reference to Elizabeth, 'Mary was neither a *little* flower nor a *western* flower. She was Elizabeth's equal, and her kingdom lay *north* of her rivals' (p. 15). Due acknowledgment is given to Boaden for his discovery that in Oberon's first speech the *time* and *place* of the action is intimated—namely, the 'princely pleasures' at Kenilworth; and in Oberon's second speech the *persons* engaged in it, although, of course, Halpin was too well read to accept Amy Robsart as the 'little western flower.' It is clear that Leicester-Cupid was carrying on a double intrigue—with the fair Vestal on the one hand, and the little western flower on the other; and that when his bolt missed one it fell upon the other; the task now is to discover the identity of the latter, but before entering on it Halpin discusses more fully than had been hitherto discussed: first, the several features of 'the princely pleasures' to which Oberon referred; and, secondly, Boaden's conjecture that Shakespeare had himself witnessed those pleasures under the escort of his townsman, Greene.

First, in regard to the princely pleasures there are three authorities: Laneham's *Letter: whearin Part of the Entertainment untoo the Queenz Majesty, at Killingwoorth Castl in Warwick Sheer, in this Soommerz Progrest* 1575, *iz signified;* Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures, with the Masque, intended to have been presented before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle;* and Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire.* It will be well to give Halpin's collation of the three authorities unabridged, that the reader may judge how closely the scene is reproduced in Oberon's description.

'*Shakespeare.* "A mermaid on a dolphin's back."

'*Laneham.* "Her Highnesse returning, cam thear, upon a swimming *mermayd, Triton*, Neptune's blaster," &c. [The italics throughout are, of course, Halpin's.]

'*Gascoigne.* "*Triton*, in the *likenesse of a mermaide*, came towards the Queen's Majestie as she passed over the bridge."

'*Laneham* (again). "*Arion*, that excellent and famouz muzicien, in tyre and appointment straunge, ryding alofte upon hiz old freend the *dolphin*," &c.

'*Gascoigne* (again). "From thence her Majestie passing yet further on the bridge, *Protheus* appeared sitting *on a dolphin's back.*" (The very words, as Mr. Boaden observes, of Shakespeare.)

'*Dugdale:* "Besides all this, he had upon the pool a *Triton riding on a mermaid* 18 foot long; as also *Arion on a dolphin.*"

'From this collation it appears that the impressions made on the eye-witnesses of the spectacle did not exactly correspond. The mythological figure that to Laneham appeared to be "Triton *upon a swimming mermaid*," to Gascoigne seemed to be "Triton *in the likeness of a mermaid.*" Again: the group that Gascoigne thought to be "*Protheus* on a dolphin's back" was taken by Laneham and Dugdale's informant for "*Arion* on the back of his old friend, the dolphin." Who can wonder, then, that to a more imaginative fancy the group should present the idea of "a *mermaid* on a dolphin's back"? But to proceed:

'*Shakespeare.* "Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath."

'*Laneham:* "Heerwith *Arion*, after a feaw well-coouched words unto her Majesty, beegan a delectabl ditty of a song well apted to a melodious noiz; compounded of

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six severall instruments, al coovert, casting soound from the dolphin's belly within; *Arion*, the seaventh, sitting thus singing (az I say) without."

'*Gascoigne:* "And the dolphyn was conveyed upon a boate, so that the owers seemed to be his fynnes. Within the which dolphyn, a consort of musicke was secretly placed; the which sounded; and Protheus, clearing his voyce, sang this song of congratulation," &c.

'*Dugdale:* "*Arion* on a dolphin with rare musick." Here, too, we observe a similar discrepancy between the two eye-witnesses, touching the musician which sang upon the dolphin's back. Gascoigne supposed it to be *Protheus;* Laneham (and Dugdale's informant) thought it *Arion*. Laneham and Gascoigne were of the household of Leicester; if they could not agree what to make of this figure "in its tyre and appointment straunge," surely the mere spectator may be pardoned for the mistake (if it were one) which transformed it into a mermaid. . . .

'*Shakespeare:* "That the rude sea grew civill at her song."

'*Laneham:* "Mooving heerwith from the bridge, and fleeting more into the pool, chargeth he [*Triton* on his mermaid] in Neptune's name both Eolus and al his windez, the waters with hiz springs, hiz fysh, and fooul, and all his clients in the same, that they ne be so hardye in any fors to stur, but keep them calm and quiet while this Queen be prezent."

'*Gascoigne:* "Triton, in the likenesse of a mermaide, came towards the Queene's Majestie as she passed over the bridge, and to her declared that Neptune had sent him to her Highnes" (and here he makes a long speech, partly in prose, partly in verse, declaring the purport of his message:) "furthermore commanding both the waues to be calme, and the fishes to giue their attendance." "And herewith," adds Gascoigne, "Triton soundeth his trompe, and spake to the winds, waters, and fishes, as followeth:

"You windes, returne into your caues, and silent there remaine,
You waters wilde, suppress your waues, and keep you calm and plaine;
You fishes all, and each thing else that here haue any sway,
I charge you all, in Neptune's name you keep you at a stay."

'Here, again, we have the same slight variations which characterise the preceding parallels. In Laneham, it is "Triton, on a swimming Mermaid," that calms the waves; in Gascoigne, "Triton, in the likenesse of a Mermaid"; and in Shakespeare, the "Mermaid" herself.

'We come now to the last particular of the pageant:

'*Shakespeare:* "And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music."

'*Laneham:* "At last the Altitonant displaz me hiz mayn poour; with blaz of burning darts, flying too and fro, leams of starz corruscant, streamz and hail of firie sparkes, lightninges of wildfier a-water and lond; flight and shoot of thunderboltz, all with such continuans, terror and vehemencie, that the heavins thundred, the waters scourged, the earth shooke."

'*Gascoigne:* "There were fireworks shewed upon the water, the which were both strange and well-executed; as sometimes passing under water a long space; when all men thought they had been quenched, they would rise and mount out of the water againe, and burn very furiously untill they were entirely consumed."

'We have now, perhaps, sufficient evidence before us to identify the time and place of Oberon's Vision with the Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth.'

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Secondly, Boaden's surmise, that it was under the wing of a poor player that the boy, William Shakespeare, witnessed the festivities at Kenilworth, arouses Halpin's gentle indignation; it was under no such humble escort that the little boy of eleven went thither, but 'as a capable and gratified spectator in the suite of his high-minded kinsman, the head of the Arden family, and in the company of his father and mother,' among the nobility and gentry. For, according to Halpin, 'Shakespeare was of gentle birth on both sides of the house,' and, following Malone, he connects the Ardens of Wilnecote with Robert Arden, Groom of the Chamber to Henry VII, and hereby makes Shakespeare of near kinship to the Edward Arden who incurred Leicester's implacable hate (by what he said and did at these very festivities, according to Halpin), and was put to death in 1583. As this Edward Arden knew the secret history of Leicester's amours, it was from his lips, so Halpin conjectures (p. 46), that Shakespeare, who was nineteen years of age when Arden was executed, may have learned the mystery of the Kenilworth festivities. This explains, so thinks Halpin, what Oberon means when he says, '*I* could see, but thou could'st not.'

But ('which doth allay the good precedence') HALLIWELL (*Life*, p. 17) says there is 'no good proof' that Robert Arden, Groom of the Chamber to Henry VII, and ancestor of Edward Arden, was 'related to the Ardens of Wilnecote'; and that 'we find the poet of nature rising where we would wish to find him rise, from the inhabitants of the valley and woodland.' If the relationship between Oberon and Edward Arden vanishes into air, into thin air, then much of Halpin's insubstantial pageant fades with it and leaves but a wreck behind.

Halpin now addresses himself (p. 25) to the discovery of the 'little western flower': It is clear that the entertainment at Kenilworth was Leicester's 'bold stroke for a wife'; it was certainly an expensive one, it cost him £60,000, it is said; and the stroke failed. Halpin thinks that from Laneham and Gascoigne we can learn the very day when the Earl's plans were frustrated. There certainly appears to have been one day during which the Queen remained indoors, and the pageants prepared for that day were postponed. Both Laneham and Gascoigne attribute the Queen's seclusion to the weather, but Halpin prefers to believe that it was due to a cause, which Sir Walter Scott imagined and made use of, in *Kenilworth;* 'or to an event of a similar kind, *an offence*, to wit, *arising out of female jealousy*. And such precisely is the transaction which—visible to Oberon and the superior intelligences—was indiscernible to Puck and the meaner spirits in attendance.' Of course the object of Elizabeth's jealousy was the little western flower, and Leicester's history must be scanned to find her out. 'Leicester,' says Halpin, p. 30, 'was, in fact, married (whether lawfully or otherwise) to three wives: first, Amy Robsart, in the year 1550; secondly, to Douglas, widow of the Earl of Sheffield, in or about 1572; and lastly, to Lettice, widow of Walter, Earl of Essex, 1576. This last date brings us so close upon the royal visit to Kenilworth and to the disturbance of its festivities, that whatsoever were the embarrassments ascribed to Leicester by Sir Walter Scott, or whatever the incident alluded to by Shakespeare in the line—"before milk-white, now purple with Love's wound" —I cannot withhold my belief that they bear true reference to the Lady Lettice, Countess of Essex and none other.'

It is not worth while to follow Halpin in his history of Leicester, especially as his statements by no means tally in all particulars with the facts set forth in DEVEREUX'S *Lives and Letters of the Earls of Essex*, 1853. I am here giving Halpin's conclusions drawn from other sources. At the time of the Princely Pleasures, Leicester's wife

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was Lady Douglas, Countess of Sheffield, but he was having an intrigue with Lady Essex, whose husband was in Ireland. 'Doubtless the ladies of the court attended their mistress on her Summer Progress; doubtless the wives of her principal officers of state and of her chief nobility either attended in her suite or were invited to grace her reception. Amongst one or other of these classes it is but natural to suppose that the wife of a nobleman so high as Essex in the confidence and employment of the Queen, and a mistress so dear to the heart of her Majesty's princely entertainer, would not have been omitted. We may then safely conclude that the Countess of Essex was a partaker of these splendid festivities; and as lovers are known to think themselves most unobserved when most in a crowd of company, no occasion can be imagined more likely to encourage those petty indiscretions which would betray their secret to the keen-sighted few than the crowded and bustling scenes of pleasure in which they were engaged. "*I* saw, but *thou* couldst not," is the sly remark of Oberon' (pp. 42, 43).

Among these 'keen-sighted few' was Edward Arden, Shakespeare's 'distinguished kinsman,' and his informant. When, eight years afterwards, Arden fell a victim to Leicester's vengeance, although the ostensible cause of his condemnation to death was high treason, the chief cause was, according to Dugdale, for 'certain harsh expressions touching his [Leicester's] private accesses to the Countess of Essex before she was his wife.' As Leicester was married to Lady Essex 'soon after' the death of the Earl of Essex in 1576, and as the princely pleasures took place in 1575, Halpin thinks it is clear that Arden's 'harsh expressions' must have been uttered at Kenilworth during the festivities. In regard to the time that elapsed between Essex's death and the marriage of his widow to Leicester, Halpin's 'soon after' is in reality two years. Essex died in September, 1576, and the marriage took place in September, 1578, three years after the Princely Pleasures. 'Shakespeare was nineteen years of age at the death of his kinsman; he may, therefore, have heard the story from his own lips. . . . Have we not, then, in the connection between the death of Edward Arden and the guilty secret of the Lady Essex the grounds of a probable conclusion that her Ladyship is the person intended to be designated under the allegory of the "little western flower?"' (p. 46). So varied is taste in such matters that I cannot presume to decide whether or not it detracts from the sentiment of the occasion, to reflect that the 'little western flower,' at the time of the festivities of Kenilworth, was between thirty-five and forty years old.

Halpin now turns to one of Lylie's court-plays, called *Endymion*, wherein he finds such collateral evidence of his theory as will bring satisfaction to 'the most incredulous minds.' The earliest known edition of *Endymion* is dated 1591, 'though probably written and performed (if not published) some years before.' It will not prove worth the labour to enter here into all the details of Halpin's analysis of this play, which fills nigh thirty of his hundred pages; it is sufficient to accept his conclusions, viz. that *Endymion* is an allegory from beginning to end, veiling Leicester's clandestine marriage with Lady Douglas Sheffield, pending his suit for the hand of his royal mistress, and the consequences of that hazardous engagement; it is parallel to Shakespeare's allegory, except that instead of the little western flower, we have the Countess of Sheffield. If here and there known facts belie the allegory, such as where the Lady Douglas, under the name of Tellus, represents herself as a 'poor credulous virgin,' we can always apply the reflection that 'in works of fiction we must not expect a rigid conformity with the facts they shadow forth.' Halpin concludes that *Endymion*

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is the Earl of Leicester; *Cynthia*, Queen Elizabeth; *Tellus*, the Countess of Sheffield, and so on. There is also another character in Lylie's allegory which finds its parallel in Oberon's vision, and this is the 'unobtrusive *Floscula*, who contributes nothing to the action, and but little to the dialogue.' In her, Halpin recognises the *little* western *flower*, the Countess of Essex; and finding that, in this instance, Shakespeare's English is a translation of Lylie's Latin, he observes that the same holds good in the case of Lylie's *Cynthia*, who is Shakespeare's *Moon*, i. e. Queen Elizabeth; and Lylie's *Tellus*, who is Shakespeare's *Earth*, i. e. the Countess of Sheffield. Oberon says that he saw 'Cupid' 'Flying between the *cold moon* and the *earth*'; 'it is necessary to observe,' says Halpin (p. 89), 'how accurately, discriminately, and delicately the nice, descriptive touches of the poet are adapted to the rank, family, and misfortunes of the unhappy lady who is shadowed out under the allegory of "the Little Flower." 1. She is a "little" flower, as compared with the royal vestal—she a countess, Elizabeth a queen. [As a fact, the Countess of Essex's grandmother and Anne Bolleyn were sisters; her mother and Queen Elizabeth were therefore cousins.] 2. She is a "western" flower, that is, an English flower—an Englishwoman, a member of the English court. If, beyond this, the epithet have a special signification, it may refer to the office and residence of her noble husband, the Earl of Essex, who was warden of Wales, the most western part of Britain, and *she*, therefore, *par excellence*, a *western* flower, *i. e.* a *western* lady. [Halpin forgets that relatively to Oberon and the scene of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the whole British isle was in the west—the fair vestal herself was throned by the west.] 3. She was once "milk-white," indicating her purity and reputation while true to the nuptial bond with Essex; but, 4, has become "purple with Love's wound," signifying either the shame of her fall from virtue, or the deeper crimson of a husband's blood. Finally, her name is "Love in idleness," one of the many fanciful names of the *Viola tricolor*—all indicative of the tender passion accompanied with concealment—such as "Pansies" (*pensées*, thoughts), "Cuddle-me-close," "Kiss-at-the-garden-gate," "Two-faces-under-a-hood," &c. But there is a peculiar elegance and significancy in the synonym which Shakespeare has selected—"Love-in-Idleness." It indicates the occasion of her fall,—the absence of her lord, the waste of her affections, the "idleness," as it were, of her heart, unoccupied with domestic duties, and left a prey to the sedulous villany of a powerful and crafty betrayer. . . . The story is an eventful one. It involves the fate of princes, statesmen, and nobles, and is therefore fitly ushered in with portents, which, in the universal belief of the time, omened the fortunes of the great. The mermaid singing her enchantments—a superstition descended from the ancient fable of the sirens—was the old and apposite type of those female seductions generally so fatal to their objects. The "stars shooting madly from their spheres" were, in that stage of the march of intellect, the prodigies which foreboded disasters to the great. The whole literature of that period abounds with allusions to those "skiey influences." On this occasion, the phenomenon seems to have signified a *Star*—a high and mighty potentate—wildly rushing from the sphere of the bright and lofty *Moon*—a princess of the highest rank—darting beneath the attractions of the *Earth*—another lady, but of inferior grade—and falling in a jelly, as falling stars are apt to do, on the lap of *Love in idleness*, an emblematic *flower*, signifying, in the typical language of the day, a mistress in concealment. . . . Let us now compare the poetical allegory (in juxtaposition) with a simple paraphrase of the literal meaning which has been assigned to it. . . .

[153–175. My gentle Pucke . . . that flower]

Text	Paraphrase
OBERON.	OBERON.
My gentle Puck, come hither. *Thou rememberest,* *When once I sat upon a promontory* * *And saw* *a mermaid on a dolphin's back,* *Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath* *That the rude sea grew civil at her song;* *And certain stars shot madly* *from their spheres* *To hear the sea-maid's music.*	Come hither, Puck. You doubtless remember when, once upon a time, sitting together on a rising ground, or *bray* * by the side of a piece of water, we saw what to us appeared (though to others it might have worn a different semblance) a mermaid sitting on a dolphin's back, and singing so sweetly to the accompaniment of a band of music placed inside of the artificial dolphin that one could very well imagine the waves of the mimic sea before us would, had they been ruffled, have calmed down to listen to her melody; and at the same time, there was a flight of artificial fireworks resembling stars, which plunged very strangely out of their natural element into the water, and, after remaining there a while, rose again into the air, as if wishing to hear once more the sea-maid's music.
PUCK.	PUCK.
I remember.	I remember such things to have been exhibited amongst the pageantry at Kenilworth Castle, during the Princely Pleasures given on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1575.
OBERON.	OBERON.
That very time I saw— (*but* thou *couldst not,*) *Flying* *between the cold moon* *and the Earth,* *Cupid* *all-armed.*	You are right. Well, at that very time and place, I (and perhaps a few other of the choicer spirits) could discern a circumstance that was imperceptible to you (and the meaner multitude of guests and visitants): in fact, I saw—wavering in his passion between (Cynthia, or) Queen Elizabeth, and (Tellus, or) the Lady Douglas, Countess of Sheffield, (Endymion, or) the Earl of Leicester, all-armed, in the magnificence of his preparations for storming the heart of his Royal Mistress.

* Probably "the Brayz" mentioned by Laneham as "linking a fair park with the castle on the South," and adjacent to the "goodly pool of rare beauty, breadth, length, and depth."—See Nichols's *Progresses.*

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Text	Paraphrase
A certain aim he took	He made a pre-determined and a well-
At a fair Vestal	directed effort for the hand of Elizabeth,
throned by the West;	the Virgin Queen of England;
And loosed a love-shaft madly [sic]	and presumptuously made such love to
from his bow,	her—rash under all the circumstances—
As it should pierce	as if he fancied that neither she nor any
a hundred thousand hearts;	woman in the world could resist his suit;
But I might see	but it was evident to me (and to the rest
young Cupid's fiery shaft	of the *initiated*), that the ardent Leices-
	ter's desperate venture
Quenched in the chaste beams	was lost in the pride, prudery, and jealousy
	of power, which invariably swayed
of the wat'ry Moon;	the tide of Elizabeth's passions; and the
And the imperial Votaress	Virgin Queen
passed on,	finally departed from Kenilworth Castle un-
in maiden meditation	shackled with a matrimonial engagement,
fancy-free.	and as heart-whole as ever.
Yet	And yet (continues Oberon) curious to
	observe the collateral issues of this amor-
marked I	ous preparation, I watched (whatever others
	may have done) and discovered the person
where the bolt of Cupid	on whom Leicester's irregular passion was
fell:	secretly fixed:
It fell	it was fixed
upon a little western flower,	upon Lettice, at that time the wife of Wal-
	ter, Earl of Essex, an Englishwoman of
	rank inferior to the object of his great
Before milk-white;	ambition; who, previous to this unhappy
	attachment, was not only pure and inno-
	cent in conduct, but unblemished also in
now purple with Love's wound;	reputation; after which she became not
	only deeply inflamed with a criminal pas-
	sion, and still more deeply (perhaps) stained
	with a husband's blood, but the subject,
	also, of shame and obloquy.
And maidens	Those, however, who pity her weakness,
call it	and compassionate her misery, still offer a
	feeble apology for her conduct, by calling it
Love in Idleness.	the result of her husband's voluntary ab-
	sence, of the waste of affections naturally
	tender and fond, and of the idleness of a
	heart that might have been faithful if busied
	with honest duties, and filled with domestic
	loves.
	You cannot mistake, after all I have
	said—
Fetch me that flower.	Go—fetch me that flower.

[153–175. My gentle Pucke . . . that flower]

Such is Halpin's explanation of 'Oberon's vision.' It does not appear, despite its ingenuity, to have made any impression on some of the best Shakespearian editors; it may well be that they were appalled by its intricacy and length. It is not even alluded to by DYCE, COLLIER, or STAUNTON. Possibly they were repelled by the cruel conclusion that it was not a flower, but Lettice Knollys, that was to be squeezed in Titania's eyes. However, Halpin has one staunch follower, one who with a greedy ear will devour up any discourse which aims at identifying Shakespeare's characters with that group around Southampton, to whose loves, to whose jealousies, to whose hates he would fain have us believe Shakespeare crammed his plays to bursting with allusions.

Mr GERALD MASSEY (*The Secret Drama of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 1888) asserts that Halpin has 'conclusively shown the "little western flower"' to be Lettice Knollys, but on one or two minor points Halpin does not take Massey with him. 'My interpretation,' says MASSEY (p. 446), 'of Oberon's remark, "That very time I saw, *but thou couldst not*," is to this effect: Shakespeare is treating Puck, for the moment, as a personification of his own boyhood. "*Thou rememberest* the rare vision we saw at the 'Princely Pleasures' of Kenilworth?" "I remember," replies Puck. So that he was then present, and saw the sights and all the outer realities of the pageant. But the Boy of eleven could not see what Oberon saw—the matrimonial mysteries of Leicester; the lofty aim of the Earl at a Royal prize, and the secret intrigue then pursued by him and the Countess of Essex. Whereupon, the Fairy King unfolds in Allegory what he before saw in vision, and clothes the naked skeleton of fact in the very bloom of beauty. My reading will dovetail with the other to the strengthening of both. But Mr Halpin does not explain *why* this "little flower" should play so important a part; why it should be the chief object and final cause of the whole allegory, so that the royal range of the imagery is but the mere setting; why it should be the only link of connection betwixt the allegory and the play. My rendering alone will show why and how. The allegory was introduced on account of these two cousins; [it should be here observed that, according to Mr Massey, the *causa causans* of the present play was the jealousy of Elizabeth Vernon, and her bickerings with her cousin Lady Rich, who are, respectively, Helena and Hermia]; the "little western flower" being mother to Lady Rich and aunt to Elizabeth Vernon. The Poet pays the Queen a compliment by the way, but his allusion to the love-shaft loosed so impetuously by Cupid is only for the sake of marking where it fell, and bringing in the Flower. It is the little flower alone that is necessary to his present purpose, for he is entertaining his "Private Friends" more than catering for the amusement of the Court. This personal consideration will explain the tenderness of the treatment. Such delicate dealing with the subject was not likely to win the Royal favour; the "imperial votaress" never forgave the "little western flower," and only permitted her to come to Court once, and then for a private interview, after her Majesty learned that Lettice Knollys had really become Countess of Leicester. Shakespeare himself must have had sterner thoughts about the lady, but this was not the time to show them; he had introduced the subject for poetic beauty, not for poetic justice. He brings in his allegory, then, on account of those who are related to the "little western flower," and in his use of the flower he is playfully tracing up an effect to its natural cause. The mother of Lady Rich is typified as the flower called "Love-in-idleness." . . . And the daughter was like the mother. "It comes from his mother," said the Queen, with a sigh, speaking of the dash of wilful devilry and the Will-o'-

[153–175. My gentle Pucke . . . that flower]

the-wisp fire in the Earl of Essex's blood! Shakespeare, in a smiling mood, says the very same of Lady Rich and her love-in-idleness. "It comes from her mother!" She, too, was a genuine "light-o'-love," and possessed the qualities attributed to the "little western flower"—the vicious virtue of its juice, the power of glamourie by communicating the poison with which Cupid's arrow was touched when dipped for doing its deadliest work. These she derives by inheritance; and these she has tried to exercise in real life on the lover of her cousin. The juice of "love-in-idleness" has been dropped into Southampton's eyes, and in the Play its enchantment has to be counteracted. And here I part company with Mr Halpin. "*Dian's bud*," the "*other herb*," does not represent *his* Elizabeth, the Queen, but *my* Elizabeth, the "faire Vernon." It cannot be made to fit the Queen in any shape. If the herb of more potential spell, "whose liquor hath this *virtuous* property" that it can correct all errors of sight, and "undo this hateful imperfection" of the enamoured eyes—"Dian's bud, o'er Cupid's flower, Hath such force and blessed power,—" were meant for the Queen, it would have no application whatever in life, and the allegory would not *impinge* on the Play. Whose eyes did this virtue of the Queen purge from the grossness of wanton love? Assuredly not Leicester's, and as certainly not those of the Lady Lettice. The facts of real life would have made the allusion a sarcasm on the Queen's virgin force and "blessed power," such as would have warranted Iago's expression, "*blessed fig's end!*" If it be applied to Titania and Lysander, what had the Queen to do with them, or they with her? The allegory will not go thus far; the link is missing that should connect it with the drama. No. "Dian's bud" is not the Queen. It is the emblem of Elizabeth Vernon's true love and its virtue in restoring the "precious seeing" to her lover's eyes, which had in the human world been doating wrongly. It symbols the triumph of love-in-earnest over love-in-idleness; the influence of that purity which is here represented as the offspring of Dian. Only thus can we find that the meeting-point of Queen and Countess, of Cupid's flower and Dian's bud, in the Play, which is absolutely essential to the existence and the oneness of the work; only thus can we connect the cause of the mischief with its cure. The allusion to the Queen was but a passing compliment; the influence of the "*little western flower*" and its necessary connection with persons in the drama are as much the *sine quâ non* of the Play's continuity and developement as was the jealousy of Elizabeth Vernon a motive-incident in the poetic creation.'

Warburton's explanation that by the mermaid the Queen of Scots was meant, was silently adopted by JOHNSON, and was praised by CAPELL. I have said that one of our best modern critics had also accepted it.—HUNTER (*New Illust.* i, 291) observes, as follows: I profess at once my adherence to the interpretation which Bishop Warburton has given of the allegorical portion of this celebrated passage, so far as to the mermaid representing the Queen of Scots; and I think I can perceive some reasons for this, which were not adverted to by himself and which have been left unnoticed by Ritson, [by Boaden, and by Halpin]. . . . It may be admitted that to place a mermaid on the back of a dolphin is perhaps not the happiest conception that might have been formed, and there have been found critics who have scoffed at it; but this has nothing to do with the question whether the mermaid had any counterpart in the allegory, and whether that counterpart was the Queen of Scots. . . . Seeing the large space which the mermaid occupies, it can hardly be that, if there is an allegory at all, she does not bear a part in it; and, seeing how everything said of the mermaid has its counterpart in the Queen of Scots, and not in any other person, it can hardly be that

[153–175. My gentle Pucke . . . that flower]

the mermaid was not intended to represent her. She has the dolphin with her, which may certainly seem very well to arise out of the fact that she had been married to the Dauphin of France; she utters 'dulcet and harmonious breath'; and, beside the general charm which surrounded this royal lady, . . . if we must interpret the allegory in a literal spirit, we know on the best authority that she had an 'alluring Scottish accent,' which, with the agreeableness of her conversation, fascinated all that approached her, and subdued even harsh and uncivil minds. But some were touched by it more than others. She had not been long in England when two Northern earls broke out in open rebellion, and would have made her queen. . . . Here, at least, it must be admitted that we have what answers very well to stars that 'shot madly from their spheres To hear the sea-maid's music.' There is not indeed a circumstance about the mermaid to which we do not find something correspondent in the Scottish Queen. Now proceed to the other half of the allegory. 'That very time I saw (but thou could'st not).' *That very time*:—These words are most important. At the very time when the Duke of Norfolk was aspiring to the hand of the Queen of Scots, and so, shooting from his sphere, the Queen of England was herself strongly solicited to marry. [See lines 161–165.] Halpin would give Cupid a counterpart. The Earl of Leicester, according to his theory, is Cupid. This never could have been the intention of the poet, who uses one of the most ordinary of all figures, supplied from the store-house of the ancient mythology, to represent the advances which were made to Elizabeth. The expression *at that very time* appears to have escaped the notice of the learned commentator who shewed the true interpretation of this passage, and yet it appears to me to connect the two parts and to leave no shadow of doubt that his hypothesis is the right one. The identity in respect of time happens to be very distinctly marked in a few lines in Camden's *Annals*: 'Non majorem curam et operam ad has nuptias conficiendas adhibuerunt Galli, quam Angli nonnulli ad alias accelerandas inter Scotorum Reginam et Norfolchium.' The suitor to Queen Elizabeth was, of course, the Duke of Anjou. At the very time when at the sea-maid's music certain stars shot from their spheres, the strong dart aimed by Cupid against Elizabeth fell innocuous; and she passed on 'In maiden meditation fancy-free.' The allegory ends here, according to all just rule, when the flower is introduced. This flower was a real flower about to perform a conspicuous part in the drama, and the allegory is written expressly to give a dignity to the flower; it is the splendour of preparation intended to fix attention on the flower, whose peculiar virtues were to be the means of effecting some of the most important purposes of the drama. The passage resembles, in this respect, one a little before, in which there is an interest given to the little henchman by the recital of the gambols of Titania with his mother on the sea-shore of India, and the interest thrown around Othello's handkerchief. The allegory has been complete, and has fulfilled its purpose when we come to the flower, which in the hands of the poet undergoes a beautiful metamorphose, and has now acquired all the interest which it was desirable to give it, and poetically and dramatically necessary, considering the very important part which was afterwards to be performed by it.

In the copy of Hanmer's *Shakespeare*, which Mrs F. A. KEMBLE used in her Public Readings, and which she gave to the present Editor, there is in the margin opposite this passage the following MS note by that loved and venerated hand:—'It always seems to me the crowning hardship of Mary Stuart's hard life to have had this precious stone thrown at her by the hand of Shakespeare—it seems to me most miserable, even

The iuyce of it, on ſleeping eye-lids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Vpon the next liue creature that it ſees.
Fetch me this hearbe, and be thou heere againe,
Ere the *Leuiathan* can ſwim a league.

Pucke. Ile put a girdle about the earth, in forty minutes.

177. *or man*] *a man* F_3F_4, Rowe.
178. *it ſees*] *is seen* Coll. MS.
181. *Ile...earth*] One line, Pope et seq.
181. *about*] *roūd about* Q_1. *round about* Pope et seq.
182. [Exit. Ff.

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when I think of all her misery, that she should have had this beautiful, bad record from the humanest man that ever lived, and, for her sins, the greatest poet—and she that was wise (not good) and prosperous, to have this crown of stars set on her narrow forehead by the same hand.'

Apart from the impossibility, which Hunter sees, but Halpin and Massey do not see, of including in the allegory 'the little western flower,' there is to me in the acceptance of Halpin's whole theory one obstacle which is insurmountable, and this is, the length of time which had elapsed between the festivities at Kenilworth and the date of this play. To suppose that Shakespeare's audience, whether at court or at the theatre, would at once, on hearing Oberon's vision, recall Leicester's intrigue of twenty years before, is to assume a capacity for court-scandal which verges on the supernatural, and a memory for it which could be regarded only with awe. Moreover, taking the very earliest date ascribed by any critic to this play, 1590, at that time 'Cupid' had been dead two years, and 'the little western flower' was living with her third husband. Finally, KURZ has pointed out (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, 1869, p. 295) that as far as the Princelie Pleasures were concerned the age was so accustomed to such performances that any reference to these particular festivities would be understood by no one but the poet himself; 'they were a drop, glittering 'tis true, but yet a mere drop in a sea of similar festivals, with pageants and plays wherein there was a deadly sameness of subjects drawn from the mythology of the Renaissance-Antique. Nay, a glance at the various Courts of the Continent enlarges this sea to an ocean; such revelries were everywhere, and all of them described and printed and engraved and passed on from Court to Court—from highest Jove to the latest sea-monsters, all hackneyed alike.'—ED.

180. Leuiathan] W. A. WRIGHT: The margins of the Bibles in Shakespeare's day explained leviathan as a whale, and so no doubt he thought it.

181. Ile] COLLIER'S MS changed this to *I'd*, which LETTSOM (ap. Dyce, ed. ii) says the sense requires. Collier, however, did not adopt it; HUDSON did.

181. girdle] STEEVENS: Perhaps this phrase is proverbial. Compare Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois*, 1607: 'To put a girdle round about the world.'—*Works*, ii, 6.—HALLIWELL: This metaphor is not peculiar to Shakespeare. The idea and expression were probably derived from the old plans of the world, in which the Zodiac is represented as 'a girdle round about the earth.' Thus, says the author of *The Compost of Ptolomeus*, 'the other is large, in maner of a girdle, or as a garland of flowers, which they doe call the Zodiack.' [Halliwell cites several other examples to the

Ober. Hauing once this iuyce,
Ile watch *Titania*, when ſhe is aſleepe,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing when ſhe waking lookes vpon,
(Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,
On medling Monkey, or on buſie Ape)
Shee ſhall purſue it, with the ſoule of loue.
And ere I take this charme off from her ſight,
(As I can take it with another hearbe)
Ile make her render vp her Page to me.
But who comes heere? I am inuiſible,
And I will ouer-heare their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Deme. I loue thee not, therefore purſue me not,

184. *when*] *whence* Q_2.
aſleepe] *a ſleepe* Q_1F_3.
185. *in her*] *on her* Han.
186. *when*] *which* Rowe+. *then* Q_1, Cap. et seq.
188. *On medling*] *Or medling* Rowe, Pope.
190. *off from*] *from of* Q_1. *from off* Theob. Cap. Sta. Cam. White ii.
194. [Scene III. Pope+.

same effect, and STAUNTON, who says that the phrase seems to have been a proverbial mode of expressing a voyage round the world, adds another from Shirley's *Humourous Courtier*, I, i: 'Thou hast been a traveller, and convers'd With the Antipodes, almost put a girdle About the world.' See also, to the same purpose, WALKER, *Crit.* iii, 48.—GREEN (*Emblem Writers*, p. 413) gives an Emblem by Whitney, 1586, representing a globe whereon rides Drake's ship, which first circumnavigated the earth; to the prow of this ship is attached a girdle which goes round the world, while the other end is held by the hand of God, issuing from the clouds.—ED.]

181. forty] ELZE (*Notes*, &c. 1889, p. 230) has collected a large number of instances of the use of 'forty' as an indefinite number, in German as well as in English, from the 'forty days and forty nights' of the Deluge to Whittier's *Barbara Frietchie*, 1879: 'Forty flags with their silver stars, Forty flags with their crimson bars.'

184. when she] Note how the ear of the compositor of Q_2 misled him when he set up *whence she* for 'when she.'—ED.

185. drop the liquor] See the extract from the *Diana* of George of Montemayor, in Appendix, *Source of the Plot.*

193. inuisible] THEOBALD: As Oberon and Puck may be frequently observed to speak when there is no mention of their entering, they are designed by the poet to be supposed on the stage during the greatest part of the remainder of the play, and to mix, as they please, as spirits, with the other actors, without being seen or heard, but when to their own purpose.—COLLIER (ed. ii): Among the 'properties' enumerated in Henslowe's *Diary* is 'a robe for to go invisible.' Possibly Oberon wore, or put on, such a robe, by which it was understood that he was not to be seen.

196. pursue me not] Mrs F. A. KEMBLE [*MS note*]: Was it not well devised

Where is *Lyſander*, and faire *Hermia*? 197
The one Ile ſtay, the other ſtayeth me.
Thou toldſt me they were ſtolne into this wood;
And heere am I, and wood within this wood, 200
Becauſe I cannot meet my *Hermia*.

198. *ſtay...ſtayeth*] QqFf, Knt, Hal. *slay...slayeth* Thirlby, Theob. et cet.
199. *into*] *vnto* Qq, Cap. Steev.'85, Sta. Cam. White ii.
200. *wood...wood*] *wodde,...wood* Q_1. *wode...wood* Han. Cap. Cam.
201. *my*] *with* Mal. Steev.'93, Var. Sing. i.

to make the timid, feminine Helena the pursuer of her indifferent, inconstant lover? We know how she looked—tall and slender, fair, delicate, and fragile. If the short, round, dark-eyed Hermia had thus wooed a man, it would have been unlovely. Shakespeare has wonderfully given this bold position to a 'maiden never bold'; and the pale, pathetic figure imploring vainly a man's love, and enduring patiently his contemptuous refusal, still represents a more tender and feminine idea than the blooming, well-beloved maiden pointing to the remote turf where she will have her lover lie that he may not offend her by his nearness while they sleep together in the wood.

198. **stay . . . stayeth**] At an early date, 1729, the Rev. STYAN THIRLBY, in a letter to Theobald, proposed, without comment, the change of 'stay . . . stayeth' to *slay . . . slayeth*, and this excellent emendation has commended itself to almost every editor since then. As far as I know, the only defenders of the original text are HEATH, KNIGHT, and HALLIWELL. The first urges (p. 50) that 'there is not the least foundation for imputing this bloody disposition [expressed by Thirlby's change] to Demetrius. His real intention is sufficiently expressed by [the Folio, viz:] "I will arrest Lysander, and disappoint his scheme of carrying off Hermia; for 'tis upon the account of this latter that I am wasting away the night in this wood." I believe, too, another instance cannot be given, wherein a lady is said to *slay* her lover by the slight she expresses for him.' [*Aliquando dormitat*, &c. The truly admirable Heath quite forgot the song in *Twelfth Night*: 'I am slain by a fair, cruel maid,' II, iv, 55. He properly referred, however, 'stay' to Lysander, and 'stayeth' to Hermia. But KNIGHT, who adds no new argument, confuses them. HALLIWELL merely reprints Heath's note, and adds two needless instances, where 'stay' means *to arrest*. ZACHARY JACKSON, who, with his tribesmen, BECKET and LORD CHEDWORTH, is never quoted in these pages, upholds the Folio, so says Knight; this is quite sufficient to condemn it.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i), in reference to the plea urged by Heath, that it is unnecessary to attribute murderous designs to Demetrius, properly calls attention to Demetrius's wish (III, ii, 67) to give Lysander's carcase to his hounds, and he might have added Hermia's fear, expressed more than once, that her lover had been slain by Demetrius.—ED.]

200. **wood . . . wood**] Of course, a play upon words, where the former 'wood' means *enraged*, and, as it is the Anglosaxon *wód*, examples of it may be found in our earliest literature. It is worth considering whether, in a modernised text, it would not be well to indicate the difference in meaning by spelling the former *wode*, as has been done by HANMER, CAPELL, and by W. A. WRIGHT, in *The Cambridge Edition*. A slight objection to it lies in the fact that we are by no means sure that there was a distinction between the words in general pronunciation. The *wodde* of Q_1 may be a mere misprint, or the peculiar spelling of a single compositor.—ED.

Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.
Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted Adamant,
But yet you draw not Iron, for my heart
Is true as ſteele. Leaue you your power to draw,
And I ſhall haue no power to follow you.
Deme. Do I entice you? do I ſpeake you faire?
Or rather doe I not in plaineſt truth,
Tell you I doe not, nor I cannot loue you?
Hel. And euen for that doe I loue thee the more;
I am your ſpaniell, and *Demetrius*,
The more you beat me, I will fawne on you.

202. *thee*] *the* Q_1F_3.
204. *Iron, for*] *Iron for* Gould.
205. *you*] Om. F_3F_4.
209. *nor*] *not* Qq. *and* Pope, Han.
210. *thee*] Q_2Ff, Rowe+, White i. *you* Q_1 et cet.

203. **You**] If Shakespeare indicated shades of meaning by the use of *thou* and *you* (and sometimes I am inclined, so difficult or so fanciful is the analysis, to think he did not always so indicate them), it would be interesting to note in this dialogue the varying emotions of love, contempt, respect, and anger that flit over the speakers and find expression in these personal pronouns.—ED.

203. **Adamant**] Cotgrave gives. 'Aimant: m. *A louer, a seruant, a sweet-heart, also, the Adamant, or Load-stone.*' Again, 'Calamite: m. *The Adamant, Loadstone, or Magnes-stone.*' The qualities of the lodestone are well known at the present day, and as they were no less well known in Shakespeare's day, examples of their use in poetry or prose are superfluous. It is sufficient to know that lodestone and 'adamant' were formerly synonymous.—ED.

204. for] LETTSOM (ap. Dyce, ed. ii) queries if this should not be *though*, and HUDSON suspects that 'he is right, as he is apt to be.'—MARSHALL (*Henry Irving Sh.* p. 372) adopts *though*, and says 'for' in the sense of *because* is nonsense. 'If we retain "for,"' he urges, 'we must take it as equivalent to *for all*, i. e. *in spite of all.*'—D. WILSON (p. 248): In the Ff 'Iron' is printed with a capital, which, in F_2 is somewhat displaced and separated from the *ron*. This has apparently suggested to the former possessor of my copy an ingenious emendation, which he has written on the margin, thus: 'You draw, not I run, for, &c. Among my own annotations are [*sic*] included this conjectural reading, 'you draw *no truer;* for,' &c. [There is no need of change if we take 'draw not' in the sense of the opposite of drawing, namely, of repulsion, which is not logical, it must be granted, but then Helena was not logical; 'you are,' she says, in effect, 'adamant only as far as I am concerned; you repel iron, as is shown by your repelling my heart, which is true steel'; or there may have been the image in Helena's mind of a piece of lodestone, such as all of us have often seen, encrusted with bits of iron, which have been drawn to it, and she says to Demetrius, in effect, 'You do not draw iron, because if you did, my heart, which is the truest steel, would be close to your heart, and I should be folded in your arms.'—ED.]

209. **nor I cannot**] For examples of this common double negative, see ABBOTT § 406, and for 'euen,' in the next line, see line 31 of this scene.

Vſe me but as your ſpaniell ; ſpurne me, ſtrike me,
Neglect me, loſe me ; onely giue me leaue
(Vnworthy as I am)to follow you.
What worſer place can I beg in your loue,
(And yet a place of high reſpect with me)
Then to be vſed as you doe your dogge.
Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my ſpirit,
For I am ſicke when I do looke on thee.
Hel. And I am ſicke when I looke not on you.
Dem. You doe impeach your modeſty too much,
To leaue the Citty, and commit your ſelfe
Into the hands of one that loues you not,
To truſt the opportunity of night,
And the ill counſell of a deſert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.
Hel. Your vertue is my priuiledge : for that
It is not night when I doe ſee your face.
Therefore I thinke I am not in the night,
Nor doth this wood lacke world's of company,
For you in my reſpect are nll the world.
Then how can it be ſaid I am alone,
When all the world is heere to looke on me?

214. *loſe*] *looſe* Q_1. *loathe* Anon. ap. Hal.
216. *can*] *can can* F_2.
218. *doe*] Ff, Rowe, White i. *do use* Var.'21, Sing. i. *vſe* Qq et cet.
dogge.] *dog?* Rowe.
228. *priuiledge : for that*] *privilege for that.* Tyrwhitt, Steev.'78, Rann. Mal. Sing. Knt, Coll. Dyce, Hal. White i, Ktly, C. Clarke, Huds. Rolfe.
232. *nll*] F_1.

214. **lose**] HALLIWELL: Perhaps this means blot me out of your memory, lose all remembrance of me.

222. **impeach**] STEEVENS: That is, bring it into question, as in *Mer. of Ven.* III, ii, 280: 'doth impeach the freedom of the state.'

228. **for that**] TYRWHITT'S punctuation (see Text. Notes), which makes 'that' refer to Helena's leaving the city, has been adopted by all the best editors down to STAUNTON, who returned to the Ff and Qq. Every editor, without exception I think, has substituted a comma at the end of the next line, after 'face,' instead of the full stop. Staunton has a respectable following in the CAMBRIDGE EDITORS.—ABBOTT, § 287, expresses no preference, and, indeed, the present question is one of the many instances where the scales are so nicely balanced that a transient mood may decide it.—ED.

229. **It is not night**, &c.] JOHNSON: Compare '—Tu nocte vel atra Lumen, et in ſolis tu mihi turba locis.'—Tibullus, *Carm.* IV, xiii, 11.

232. **respect**] That is, as far as I am concerned.

Dem. Ile run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leaue thee to the mercy of wilde beaſts.
Hel. The wildeſt hath not ſuch a heart as you;
Runne when you will, the ſtory ſhall be chang'd:
Apollo flies, and *Daphne* holds the chaſe;
The Doue purſues the Griffin, the milde Hinde
Makes ſpeed to catch the Tyger. Bootleſſe ſpeede,
When cowardiſe purſues, and valour flies.
Demet. I will not ſtay thy queſtions, let me go;
Or if thou follow me, doe not beleeue,
But I ſhall doe thee miſchiefe in the wood.
Hel. I, in the Temple, in the Towne, and Field
You doe me miſchiefe. Fye *Demetrius*,
Your wrongs doe ſet a ſcandall on my ſexe:
We cannot fight for loue, as men may doe;
We ſhould be woo'd, and were not made to wooe.
I follow thee, and make a heauen of hell,

243. *queſtions*] *question* Steev. conj. Dyce ii, iii, Walker, Huds.
244. *thou*] *you* Rowe, Pope, Han.
246, 257. *I*] *Ay* Rowe et seq.
246. *and*] Q_2Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. Var. Knt, Hal. White i, Sta. *the* Q_2 et cet.
250. [Demetrius breaks from her, and Exit. Cap. et seq. (subs.).
251. *I*] *Ile* Qq, Cap. et seq.

240. **Griffin**] WAY (*Prompt. Parv.* s. v. *Grype*, footnote): This fabulous animal is particularly described by Sir John Maundevile, in his account of Bacharie. 'In that contree ben many griffounes, more plentee than in ony other contree. Sum men seyn that thei han the body upward as an eagle, and benethe as a lyoune, and treuly thei seyn sothe that thei ben of that schapp. But o griffoun hathe the body more gret, and is more strong thanne viij. lyouns, of suche lyouns as ben o this half, and more gret and strongere than an c. egles, suche as we han amonges us.' He further states that a griffin would bear to its nest a horse, or a couple of oxen yoked to the plough; its talons being like horns of great oxen, and serving as drinking cups; and of the ribs and wing feathers strong bows were made.

240. **the milde**] For other examples of unemphatic monosyllables, like the present 'the,' standing in an emphatic place, see ABBOTT, § 457.

243. **questions**] STEEVENS: Though Helena certainly puts a few insignificant 'questions' to Demetrius, I cannot but think our author wrote *question*, i. e. discourse, conversation. So in *As You Like It*, III, iv, 39: 'I met the duke yesterday, and had much question with him.' [The same emendation occurred to WALKER, *Crit.* i, 248.]—W. A. WRIGHT: The plural may denote Helena's repeated efforts at inducing Demetrius to talk with her.

245. **But**] For many other passages illustrating the 'preventive meaning' of *but*, see ABBOTT, § 122.

251. **I follow**] There is really no reason for deserting the Ff here.—ED.

To die vpon the hand I loue ſo well. *Exit.* 252
Ob. Fare thee well Nymph, ere he do leaue this groue,
Thou ſhalt flie him, and he ſhall ſeeke thy loue.
Haſt thou the flower there? Welcome wanderer. 255

Enter Pucke.

Puck. I, there it is.
Ob. I pray thee giue it me.
I know a banke where the wilde time blowes, 259

252. Exit.] Om. Q_1. Exeunt. Rowe+.
254. [Re-enter Puck. Cap. et seq.
256. [Scene IV. Pope+.
257. *there*] *here* Lettsom, Huds.
259. *where*] *whereon* Pope+, Cap. Steev. Rann, Sing. i, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.

252. **To die**] That is, *in dying*, not *in order to die*. For similar instances of this gerundial usage, see ABBOTT, § 356.

252. **die vpon the hand**] W. A. WRIGHT: 'Upon' occurs in a temporal sense in some phrases, where it is used with the cause of anything. In such cases the consequence follows 'upon' the cause. For instance, in *Much Ado*, IV, i, 225: 'When he shall hear she died upon his words.' Again, in the same play, IV, ii, 65: 'And upon the grief of this suddenly died.' Also 'on' is used in a local sense with the instrument of an action. See below, II, ii, 112: 'O how fit a word, Is that vile name to perish on my sword!' And *Jul. Cæs.* V, i, 58: 'I was not born to die on Brutus' sword.' Hence, metaphorically, it occurs in *Lear*, II, iv, 34: 'On whose contents They summoned up their meiny.' None of these instances are strictly parallel to the one before us, but they show how 'upon the hand' comes to be nearly equivalent to 'by the hand,' while with this is combined the idea of local nearness to the beloved object which is contained in the ordinary meaning of 'upon.' A better example is found in Fletcher's *Chances*, I, ix: 'Give me dying, As dying ought to be, upon mine enemy, Parting with mankind by a man that's manly.'

255–258. **Haſt . . . me.**] DYCE (ed. ii): 'The first part of each of these two verses,' says Mr W. N. Lettsom, 'is inconsistent with the second part. Should we not read and point? "Hast thou the flower there, welcome wanderer? *Puck.* Ay, here it is. *Obe.* I pray thee give it me."' Mr Swynfen Jervis proposes: 'Welcome, wanderer. Hast thou the flower there?' [Lettsom's punctuation of line 255 is certainly good, but the change of 'there' to *here* seems needless; in either case the word would be uttered with a gesture. According to the footnotes in the CAM. ED., Zachary Jackson anticipated Swynfen Jervis. The reason is given in the *Preface* to this volume for the exclusion from these Textual Notes of Jackson's conjectures. —ED.]

259. **where**] MALONE, KEIGHTLEY, ABBOTT (§ 480), and W. A. WRIGHT pronounce this as a disyllable.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i) says that 'Malone reasonably supposed' it to be 'used as a disyllable,' and added, 'it may, at least, very properly have a disyllabic quantity,'—a distinction which it is somewhat difficult to comprehend; it is even more difficult to comprehend what rhythmical advantage these eminent editors imagine has been gained by this conversion of a monosyllable into a disyllable, when by its position in the verse the ictus must fall on its manufactured second syllable. Can it be that their ears are pleased by 'I knòw | a bànk | whe-ère | the

Where Oxſlips and the nodding Violet growes, 260
Quite ouer-cannoped with luſcious woodbine,
With ſweet muske roſes, and with Eglantine; 262

260. *Oxſlips*] *Oxlips* Q_1. *the Oxſlips* F_4, Rowe. *oxslip* Pope, Han. *ox-lip* Theob. Warb. Johns.

261. *Quite ouer-cannoped*] *Quite ouer-cannopi'd* Q_1. *O'er-cannopy'd* Pope, Theob. Warb. Johns. Cap. *White clover canopied* Bulloch.

261. *luſcious*] *luſhious* Qq. *lush* Theob. conj. Steev.'93, Coll. ii (MS), Dyce ii, Huds.

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wild | thyme blòws. | '? Unless the ictus be preserved the disyllable has been made in vain. To me, it would be better ignominiously to adopt Pope's *whereòn*. But there is no need of appealing either to Pope or to Malone. Let a pause before 'where' take the place of a syllable, as in 'swifter than the moon's sphere' in line 7 of this scene; which see. With my latest editorial breath I will denounce these disyllables devised to supply the place of a pause.—ED.

260. **Oxslips**] 'The Oxelip, or the small kinde of white Mulleyn, is very like to the Cowslippe aforesaide, sauing that his leaues be greater and larger, and his floures be of a pale or faynt yellow colour, almost white and without sauour.'—Lyte, p. 123, ed. 1578.—KEIGHTLEY (*Exp.* 132, and *N. & Qu.* 2d Ser. xii, 264) transposes 'oxlip' and 'violet,' because, as he alleges, the former 'nods' and the latter does not. This wanton change in the character of the *ox*lip he justifies by a line from *Lycidas* about the *cows*lip, a different plant: 'With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head.'—v. 14. Unquestionably the violets in this country nod, whatever their British brothers may do.—ED.

260. **grows**] Either the singular by attraction, or from the image in the mind of one bed of oxlips and violets growing together.—ED.

261. **luscious**] JOHNSON: On the margin of one of my Folios an unknown hand has written '*lush* woodbine,' which, I think, is right. This hand I have since discovered to be Theobald's.—RITSON: *Lush* is clearly preferable in point of sense, and absolutely necessary in point of metre.—STEEVENS: Compare *Temp.* II, i, 52: How lush and lusty the grass looks!'—W. A. WRIGHT: That is, sweet-scented; generally sweet to the taste. [It can be no disgrace to accept this line as an Alexandrine: 'Quite ò | ver-càn | opèd | with lùs | cioùs | woodbine,' where the resolved syllables of 'lus-ci-ous' need not be harshly nor strongly emphasised.—ED.]

261. **woodbine**] 'Woodbine or Honysuckle hath many small branches, whereby it windeth and wrappeth it selfe about trees and hedges. . . . Woodbine groweth in all this Countrie in hedges, about inclosed feeldes, and amongst broome or firres. It is founde also in woodes. . . . This herbe, or kinde of Bindeweede, is called . . . in Englishe Honysuckle, or Woodbine, and of some Caprifoyle.'—Lyte, p. 390, ed. 1578. [See IV, i, 48.]

262. **muske roses . . . Eglantine**] 'The sixth kinde of Roses called Muske Roses, hath slender springes and shutes, the leaues and flowers be smaller then the other Roses, yet they grow vp almost as high as the Damaske or Prouince Rose. The flowers be small and single, and sometimes double, of a white colour and pleasant sauour, in proportion not muche vnlyke the wilde Roses, or Canel Roses. . . . The Eglentine or sweete brier, may be also counted of the kindes of Roses, for it is lyke to the wilde Rose plante, in sharpe and cruel shutes, springes, and rough branches.'—Lyte, p. 654.

There ſleepes *Tytania*, ſometime of the night,
Lul'd in theſe flowers, with dances and delight:
And there the ſnake throwes her enammel'd skinne,
Weed wide enough to rap a Fairy in.
And with the iuyce of this Ile ſtreake her eyes,
And make her full of hatefull fantaſies.
Take thou ſome of it, and ſeek through this groue;

263. *ſometime* QqFf, Dyce, Sta. Cam. White ii. *some time* Rowe et cet.
264. *flowers*] *bowers* Coll. MS, White i. *with*] *from* Han.
266. *rap*] *wrappe* Q_1. *wrap* Ff.
267. *And*] *There* Han. *Then* Ktly. *Now* Lettsom.

263. **sometime of the night**] ABBOTT, § 176: That is, sometimes during the night.—W. A. WRIGHT: The accent shows that 'sometime' should not be separated into two words.

264. **these flowers**] COLLIER (ed. ii): Where the MS substitutes *bowers* for 'flowers,' we refuse the emendation, because it is not required.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): The context plainly shows that 'flowers' is a misprint. 'A *bank*' '*oercanopied*' with woodbine, musk-roses, and eglantine is certainly a bower; and, says Oberon, '*there* sleeps Titania,' and '*there* the snake throws her enamell'd skin.' Finally, Puck says, III, ii, 9, 'near to her close and consecrated *bower*.'—DYCE (ed. ii): 'Oddly enough, Knight has attacked the MS Corrector's reading *bowers* with a string of absurdities; while R. G. White, who adopts it, makes a remark that is conclusive against it, viz. that "a bank overcanopied with woodbine, musk-roses, and eglantine is certainly a bower." I strongly suspect that the genuine reading is "this bower."' —W. N. LETTSOM. [Hudson adopted this conjecture of Lettsom. I do not know where to find Knight's attack on Collier's MS to which Lettsom refers, and I cannot see why R. G. White's remark, which Lettsom quotes, is conclusive against the adoption of *bowers*. Hudson adds another reference, III, i, 205, 'lead him to my bower.'—ED.]

265, 266. **And . . . in**] KEIGHTLEY (*Exp.* 132, and *N. & Qu.* 2d Ser. xii, 264) transposes these two lines so as to follow line 262, a transposition which is, so he says, 'imperatively demanded by the sequence of ideas'; he also suggests that these two lines 'may have been an addition made by the poet or transcriber in the margin, and taken in in the wrong place.'—HUDSON adopted this transposition, which certainly has much in its favour, and reads, 'And *where* the snake' instead of 'And there the snake.' 'With the old order,' says Hudson, 'it would naturally seem that Oberon was to streak the snake's eyes instead of Titania's,' especially, he might have added, since 'snake' is, as W. A. WRIGHT points out, feminine, see *Macb.* III, ii, 13: 'We have scotch'd the snake. . . . She'll close,' &c.—J. CROSBY (*Lit. World*, Boston, 1 June, '78) anticipated Hudson in substituting *where* for 'there.'

266. **Weed**] A garment; the word now survives in 'widows' weeds.'

267. **And**] KEIGHTLEY: If this be the right word, something must have been lost, *e. g.* 'Upon her will I steal there as she lies'; but the poet's word may have been what I have given, *Then*, strongly emphaticized, and written *Than*, the two first letters of which having been effaced, the printer made it 'And.'

267. **streake**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, stroke, touch gently.

A ſweet *Athenian* Lady is in loue
With a diſdainefull youth : annoint his eyes,
But doe it when the next thing he eſpies,
May be the Lady. Thou ſhalt know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on.
Effect it with ſome care, that he may proue
More fond on her, then ſhe vpon her loue;
And looke thou meet me ere the firſt Cocke crow.
Pu. Feare not my Lord, your ſeruant ſhall do ſo. *Exit.*

276. *on her*] *of her* Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb.
her loue] *his love* Han.
277. *thou*] *you* Rowe+.
278. Exit.] Exeunt. Qq.

273, 274. **man . . . on**] STEEVENS: I desire no surer evidence to prove that the broad Scotch pronunciation once prevailed in England, than such a rhyme as the first of these words affords to the second.—W. A. WRIGHT: In an earlier part of the scene 'crab' rhymes to 'bob,' and 'cough' to 'laugh'; but from such imperfect rhymes, of which other examples occur in III, ii, 369, 370 [where the present rhyme of *man, on*, is repeated]; III, ii, 435, 436 [*there, here*]; Ib. 484, 486 [*ill, well*,—is any rhyme here intended? Wright's last reference is to 'V, i, 267, 268' of his own text (corresponding to V, i, 289, 290 of the present text), which must be, of course, a misprint; the two words are *here* and *see*. Wright then continues] it is unsafe to draw any inference as to Shakespeare's pronunciation. [But is it not begging the question to call these rhymes 'imperfect'? The presumption is that they are perfect, and to say that they are not, assumes a complete knowledge of Shakespeare's pronunciation. If Shakespeare again and again rhymes short *a* with short *o*, and Ellis (*E. E. Pronun.* p. 954) gives ten or a dozen instances, is it unfair to infer that to his ear the rhyme was perfect? may we not thus approximate to his pronunciation? Of course, the standard which Ellis derived from certain lists in Salesbury is not here involved. I am merely urging a gentle plea against a general condemnation of Steevens's remark, which, when it was made, indicated, I think, that Steevens's face was turned in the right direction.—ED.]

276. **on**] For numerous examples of this construction with 'on,' see ABBOTT, §§ 180, 181; and for the subjunctive 'meet,' in the next line, see Ib. § 369.

[*Scene II.*]

Enter Queene of Fairies, with her traine.

Queen. Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy ſong;
Then for the third part of a minute hence,
Some to kill Cankers in the muske roſe buds,
Some warre with Reremiſe, for their leathern wings,
To make my ſmall Elues coates, and ſome keepe backe
The clamorous Owle that nightly hoots and wonders

[Scene V. Pope+. Scene III. Steev. Mal. Sing. Knt, Coll. ii, Ktly. Act III, sc. i. Fleay. Scene II. Cap. et cet.
[Another Part of the Wood. Cap.
1. Enter] Enter *Titania* Q_1.
3. *for*] *'fore* Theob. Han. Johns. Huds. *ere* Huds. conj. *fly* Kinnear. *a minute*] *the midnight* Warb. *the* Minuit Id. conj.
6. *ſome keepe*] *keep ſome* F_4.

2. **Roundell**] See note on line 10.

3. **for**] THEOBALD thus explains his text *'fore*: The Poet undoubtedly intended Titania to say, Dance your Round, and sing your song, and then instantly (*before* the third part of a minute) begone to your respective duties.—HEATH (p. 51): I should rather incline to read: *in*. That is, after your song and dance have ended vanish in the third part of a minute, and leave me to my rest.—CAPELL: It rather seems that the queen's command is expressive of the short time in which she should be asleep after their song and dance; that absence is enjoined, but 'till she were asleep; after which, they might return if they pleased and follow the tasks she set them even about her 'cradle' as Puck calls it, her sleep's soundness would not be disturb'd by them; and this hint of its soundness is not unnecessary: for we see presently that it is not broke by the persons that enter next, nor by the clowns 'till Bottom brays-out his song.

3. **a minute**] WARBURTON pronounces this 'nonsense,' and actually substituted in his text *the midnight*.—STEEVENS: But the persons employed are *fairies*, to whom the third part of a *minute* might not be a very short time to do such work in. The critic might as well have objected to the epithet 'tall,' which the fairy bestows on the *cowslip*. But Shakespeare, throughout the play, has preserved the proportion of other things in respect of these tiny beings, compared with whose size a cowslip might be tall, and to whose powers of execution a minute might be equivalent to an age.—HALLIWELL: This quaint subdivision of time exactly suits the character of the fairy speaker and her diminutive world.

4. **Cankers**] PATTERSON (p. 34): This larva, *Lozotænia Rosana*, passes by the 'smirch'd tapestry,' and chooses for its domicile 'the fresh lap of the crimson rose.' It there lives among the blossoms, and prevents the possibility of their further development.—HALLIWELL says that this name is applied to almost any kind of destructive caterpillar. [Here in this country a popular distinction is drawn, I think, between cankers and caterpillars. The former are small and hairless, the latter may be large or small, but always hairy.—ED.]

5. **Reremise**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, bats; A.-S. *hrère-mús*, from *hreran*, to stir, to agitate, and so equivalent to the old name *flittermouse*. Cotgrave has, 'Chauvesouris: m. A Batt, Flittermouse, Reremouse.'

At our queint ſpirits : Sing me now aſleepe,
Then to your offices, and let me reſt.

Fairies Sing.

You ſpotted Snakes with double tongue,
Thorny Hedgehogges be not ſeene,
Newts and blinde wormes do no wrong,

8. *ſpirits*] *sports* Han. Warb. *Sing*] *Come, sing* Han.

10. Fairies Sing] Song. First Fairy. Cap. et seq. (subs.).

11–27. In Roman, Q_1.

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7. **clamorous**] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 157) concludes that this word, in many places in Shakespeare, evidently signifies *wailing*.

8. **queint**] Cotgrave has, 'Coint: m. Quaint, compt, neat, fine, spruce, briske, smirke, smug, daintie, trim, tricked vp.'

10. **Fairies Sing**] CAPELL was the first to divide this song into two stanzas of four lines each, with a chorus of six lines, from line 15 to line 20 inclusive. In the stanzas we have the 'Fairy Song' which the Queen calls for, and in the Chorus we have the 'Roundell,' which was 'danc'd-to as well as sung.' [This solves the difficulty of combining a dance and that which the text tells us was a song. *Rondel*, says Skeat, is an older form of *rondeau*, which Cotgrave explains as 'a rime or sonnet which ends as it begins.' Tyrwhitt cites a passage from Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*, II, i, which shows that *rondel* was a dance: 'You'd have your daughter and maids Dance o'er the fields like faies to church, this frost. I'll have no rondels, I, in the queen's paths.'—p. 154, ed. Gifford. Staunton says that a 'roundel' is 'a *dance*, where the parties joined hands and formed a ring.' He gives no authority, but adds, 'this kind of dance was sometimes called a *round*, and a *roundelay* also, according to Minshew, who explains: "Roundelay, *Shepheards daunce*."']

13. **Newts**] '*Of the Nevte or Water Lizard.* This is a little blacke Lizard, called *Wassermoll* or *Wasseraddex*, that is, a Lizard of the Water. . . . They liue in standing water or pooles, as in ditches of Townes and Hedges. . . . There is nothing in nature that so much offendeth it as salt, for so soone as it is layde vpon salt, it endeauoureth with all might & maine to runne away. . . . Beeing moued to anger, it standeth vpon the hinder legges, and looketh directlie in the face of him that hath stirred it, and so continueth till all the body be white, through a kind of white humour or poyson, that it swelleth outward, to harme (if it were possible) the person that did prouoke it.'—Topsell, p. 212.—W. A. WRIGHT: 'A newt' is an evet or eft (A.-S. *efete*), the *n* of the article having become attached to the following word, as in 'nonce,' 'noumpere' = umpire, and others. In 'adder' the opposite practice has taken place, and 'a nadder' (A.-S. *næddre*) has become 'an adder'; so 'an auger' is really 'a nauger' (A.-S. *nafegár*). ['Orange' may be also added.]

13. **blinde wormes**] '*Of the Slovv-Worme.* This Serpent was called in auncient time among the Græcians *Tythlops* and *Typhlines*, and *Cophia*, because of the dimnes of the sight thereof, and the deafenes of the eares and hearing. . . . It beeing most euident that it receiueth name from the blindnes and deafenes thereof, for I haue often prooued, that it neither heareth nor seeth here in England, or at the most it

Come not neere our Fairy Queene.
Philomele with melodie,
Sing in your ſweet Lullaby.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
Neuer harme, nor ſpell, nor charme,
Come our louely Lady nye,
So good night with Lullaby.
2. *Fairy. Weauing Spiders come not heere,*
Hence you long leg'd Spinners, hence:
Beetles blacke approach not neere;
Worme nor Snayle doe no offence.
Philomele with melody, &c.
1. *Fairy. Hence away, now all is well;*
One aloofe, ſtand Centinell. *Shee ſleepes.*

15, 25. Philomele] Chorus. *Philomel* Cap. et seq. (subs.).
16. Sing in your] *Singing her* Rann. in your] in our Q_1, Cap. et seq. *now your* Coll. MS.
21. 2. Fairy] 1. Fai. Qq (subs.), Cam.
22. Spinners] Spinders Q_2.
26. 1. Fairy] 2. Fai. Qq (subs.), Coll. Sta. Cam.
27. Shee ſleepes] Om. QqF_3F_4. Exeunt Fairies. Rowe.

seeth no better then a Mole. . . . They love to hide themselues in Corne-fieldes vnder the rype corne when it is cut downe. It is harmlesse except being prouoked, yet many times when an Oxe or a Cow lieth downe in the pasture, if it chaunce to lye vppon one of these Slow-wormes, it byteth the beast, & if remedy be not had, there followeth mortalitie or death, for the poyson thereof is very strong.—Topsell, p. 239. Marshall (*Irving Sh.* p. 374) says that it is impossible to imagine two animals more harmless than newts and blind-worms. Topsell, who was translating Gesner probably at the very hour Shakespeare was writing this play, gives us the belief, not only of the common folk, but of the naturalists of the time.—ED.

15, 16. **melodie . . . Lullaby**] See I, i, 200.

21. **Spiders**] It is not necessary to suppose that any deadly or even venomous qualities are here attributed to spiders, any more than to beetles, worms, or snails. It is enough that they are repulsive. Albeit, Topsell (p. 246), at the beginning of his long chapter on 'Spyders,' says: 'All spyders are venomous, but yet some more, and some lesse. Of Spyders that neyther doe nor can doe much harm, some of them are tame, familiar, and domesticall, and these be cōmonly the greatest among the whole packe of them. Others againe be meere wilde, liuing without the house abroade in the open ayre, which by reason of their rauenous gut, and greedy deuouring maw, haue purchased to thēselues the name of wolfes and hunting Spyders.' At the close, however, of his chapter (p. 272) he acknowledges that 'Our Spyders in England are not so venomous as in other parts of the world. . . . We cannot chuse but confesse that their byting is poysonlesse, as being without venome, procuring not the least touch of hurt at all to any one whatsoeuer.'—ED.

11–25. No less than eight musical settings of this song are recorded in the *List*, &c, issued by *The New Shakspere Soc.*

Enter Oberon.

Ober. What thou ſeeſt when thou doſt wake,
Doe it for thy true Loue take:
Loue and languiſh for his ſake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,
Pard, or Boare with briſtled haire,
In thy eye that ſhall appeare,
When thou wak'ſt, it is thy deare,
Wake when ſome vile thing is neere.

Enter Liſander and Hermia.

Liſ. Faire loue, you faint with wandring in ỹ woods,
And to ſpeake troth I haue forgot our way:
Wee'll reſt vs *Hermia*, if you thinke it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it ſo *Lyſander*; finde you out a bed,
For I vpon this banke will reſt my head.

Lyſ. One turfe ſhall ſerue as pillow for vs both,
One heart, one bed, two boſomes, and one troth.

29. [to Tit. squeezing the flower upon her eyelids. Cap.
30. *thy*] *thy thy* Q_2.
true Loue] *true-love* Harness, Knt, Dyce, Sta. Cam.
33. *haire*] *hear* Ktly.
34. *that*] *what* Pope, Han.
36. Exit Oberon. Rowe.
37. [Scene VI. Pope+.
38. *woods*] Q_2Ff, Rowe i, Sta. *wood* Q_1 et cet.
41. *comfort*] *comfor* Q_1.
42. *Be it*] *Bet it* Q_1. *Be't* Pope+, Dyce ii, iii.

26, 27. Capell was the first to indicate that these two lines are not a part of the song; he has been followed, of course, by all the editors since his day.—ED.

30. true Loue] W. A. WRIGHT: Possibly a corruption. In Icelandic, *trú-lofa* is to betroth. [Is not the hyphen (see Text. Notes) a corruption?—ED.]

32. Catte] W. A. WRIGHT: This must be the wild cat.

33. haire] KEIGHTLEY (*Exp.* 133): The rhyme demands the old form, *hear*. [Keightley is right, as far as he goes, but if we are to adopt the Shakespearian pronunciation in this word we must go further, and not only pronounce 'hair' *hear*, but 'bear' *beer*, which was also right. It seems scarcely worth while to adopt Shakespeare's pronunciation in isolated instances, unless there is a decided need, as in 'melody' and 'lullaby.' Although these five lines were probably perfect rhymes originally, yet as 'bear' and 'hair' are perfect rhymes at present, no change seems necessary.—ED.]

38. with] For other examples of 'with' thus used, see ABBOTT, § 193.

45. one troth] W. A. WRIGHT: One faith or trust, pledged to each other in betrothal.

45. After this line, in Garrick's *Version*, the lovers sing a duet. It is scarcely

Her. Nay good *Lyſander*, for my ſake my deere
Lie further off yet, doe not lie ſo neere.
Lyſ. O take the ſence ſweet, of my innocence,
Loue takes the meaning, in loues conference,
I meane that my heart vnto yours is knit,
So that but one heart can you make of it.
Two boſomes interchanged with an oath,

46. *good*] *god* Q_1.
48, 49. *innocence...conference*] *conference...innocence* Warb. Theob. *innocence...confidence* Coll. ii (MS).
49. *takes*] *take* Tyrwhitt, Rann.
50. *is*] *it* Q_1.
51. *can you*] Ff, White i. *wee can* Q_1. *can we* Cap. Sta. *you can* White ii. *we can* Q_2 et cet.
52. *interchanged*] Ff, White i. *interchained* Qq et cet.

worth while to cumber these pages with the words either of this song or of the fifteen others scattered through the rest of the play. They are all weak variations of the same weak theme—reflections from the 'tea-cup times of hood and hoop While yet the patch was worn.' The specimens already given will prove, I am sure, quite sufficient.—ED.

48. **innocence**] WARBURTON'S needless emendation called forth JOHNSON'S almost needless paraphrase: 'Understand the meaning of my innocence, or my innocent meaning. Let no suspicion of ill enter thy mind.'

49. **conference**] JOHNSON: In the conversation of those who are assured of each other's kindness, not *suspicion* but *love* takes the meaning. No malevolent interpretation is to be made, but all is to be received in the sense which *love* can find and which *love* can dictate.—TYRWHITT: I would read: 'Love *take* the meaning,' &c, that is, '*Let* love take the meaning,' &c.—COLLIER (ed. ii): *Confidence* is a happy emendation of the MS. What Lysander means is that Hermia should take the innocence of his intentions in the *confidence* of his love, and thence he proceeds to explain the fulness, fidelity, and purity of his attachment.—LETTSOM (*Blackwood's Maga.* Aug. 1853): The alteration of 'conference' into *confidence* is an *improvement*, most decidedly *for the worse.* What Lysander says is, that love puts a good construction on all that is said or done in the 'conference' or intercourse of love. *Confidence* makes nonsense. [To this Dyce (ed. i) gives a hearty assent.]

51. **can you**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): The reading of F_1 is not only authoritative in this essential change, but far more significant than that of the Quartos. Lysander in his attempt to meet the objections which Hermia makes to his proposition, may, with much more propriety and effect, attribute to his mistress alone the desire of separating him from her, than to make himself a party to such an endeavour.

52. **interchanged**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): *Interchained* of the Qq conveys the comparatively commonplace thought that the lovers' hearts were bound together; 'interchanged' represents them as having been given each to the other, as the most solemn instruments are made, interchangeably.—MARSHALL: The considerations which have induced us to adopt *interchained* are these: (1) it is more consonant in sense with line 50, '—my heart unto yours is *knit*'; and (2) 'bosom,' though used as *desire* (*Meas. for Meas.* IV, iii, 139), or as *inmost thoughts* (*Oth.* III, i, 58), seems never to be used for 'the affections' themselves. Shakespeare would scarcely have

So then two boſomes, and a ſingle troth.
Then by your ſide, no bed-roome me deny,
For lying ſo, *Hermia*, I doe not lye.
Her. *Lyſander* riddles very prettily;
Now much beſhrew my manners and my pride,
If *Hermia* meant to ſay, *Lyſander* lied.
But gentle friend, for loue and courteſie
Lie further off, in humane modeſty,
Such ſeparation, as may well be ſaid,
Becomes a vertuous batchelour, and a maide,
So farre be diſtant, and good night ſweet friend;
Thy loue nere alter, till thy ſweet life end.
Lyſ. Amen, amen, to that faire prayer, ſay I,
And then end life, when I end loyalty:
Heere is my bed, ſleepe giue thee all his reſt.
Her. With halfe that wiſh, the wiſhers eyes be preſt.
Enter Pucke. *They ſleepe.*
Puck. Through the Forreſt haue I gone,
But *Athenian* finde I none,

55. *lying ſo*, Hermia] *Hermia, lying so* Schmidt.
lye] *lie* Cap.
60. *off, in...modeſty,*] Q_2F_2. *off, in... modesty:* Q_1, Han. *off in...modesty,* F_3F_4. *off; in...modesty*, Theob. et cet. (subs.).
60. *humane*] *human* F_4.
67. *my*] *thy* Rowe i.
69. They ſleepe] Om. Qq.
71. *finde*] Q_2Ff, Knt, Hal. White i. *found* Q_1 et cet.

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said, 'We have *interchanged* bosoms.' The objection to *interchained* is, not that it occurs only in this passage, but that it is not to be found in any other writer, ancient or modern, as far as I can discover.

57. **beshrew**] STEEVENS expresses it a little too strongly when he says that this word 'implies a sinister wish.'—DYCE defines it more correctly, I think, as 'a mild form of imprecation, equivalent to "a mischief on."' Pronounced *beshrow*, as Walker (*Crit.* i, 158) has shown; it is thus spelled in several instances in the Folio, as well as *shrowd* and *shrode* for 'shrewd.' 'Shrewsbury' is still pronounced by some *Shrowsbury*.—ED.

60–63. **in humane modesty . . . distant**] W. A. WRIGHT: The sense is clear, though the syntax is imperfect. Delius connects 'as may well be said' with 'in human modesty,' but the construction is rather 'in human modesty (let there be) such separation,' &c., and 'So far be distant' is merely a repetition of the same thing. —D. WILSON (p. 248): Titania's use of the phrase 'human mortals' is very expressive, but 'human modesty' seems a needless pleonasm. . . . If any change be made, '*common* modesty' would better suit the context.

68. **be**] For other examples of the subjunctive used optatively, see ABBOTT, § 365.

71. **finde**] By the sequence of tenses this should be as it is in Q_2, *found*. It is

One whoſe eyes I might approue
This flowers force in ſtirring loue.
Night and ſilence : who is heere?
Weedes of *Athens* he doth weare :
This is he (my maſter ſaid)
Deſpiſed the *Athenian* maide :
And heere the maiden ſleeping ſound,
On the danke and durty ground.
Pretty ſoule, ſhe durſt not lye
Neere this lacke-loue, this kill-curteſie.

72. *One*] *On* QqFf et cet.

81. *Neere...curteſie*] *Near to this lack-love, this kill-curtesie* Pope, Steev.'73, '78. *Near to this kill-curtesie* Theob. Han. Cap. *Near to this lack-love kill-curtesie* Warb. *Near this lack-love kill-courtesie* Johns. *Near this lack-love, kill courtesy* Steev.'85, '93, Coll. ii (MS). *Nearer this lack-love, this kill-courtesy* Walker, Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *Near... court'sy* Sta.

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therefore an instance of an error the opposite to that of which WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 271) gives an example, where *finde* was printed 'found'; Lettsom, in a footnote, calls attention to the present passage.

75. **Weedes**] That is, garments; see II, i, 266.

81. **Neere . . . curtesie**] THEOBALD: This verse, as Ben Jonson says, is broke loose from his fellows, and wants to be tied up. I believe the poet wrote: 'Near to this kill-courtesie.' And so the line is reduced to the measure of the other. But this term being somewhat quaint and uncommon, the Players, in my opinion, officiously clapped in the other as a Comment; and so it has ever since held possession.—MALONE: If we read 'near' as a disyllable, like many other similar words, we shall produce a line of ten syllables, a measure which sometimes occurs in Puck's speeches: 'I must go seek some dew drops here; And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.' Again, 'I go, I go; look how I go; Swifter than arrow from a Tartar's bow.'—KNIGHT agrees with Malone that it is 'evidently intended for a long line amidst those of seven or eight syllables.'—WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 52): Read *Nearer* for 'Neere.' The force of *nearer* and Lysander's discourtesy (as it appeared to our friend Puck) are explained by the scene immediately preceding between Lysander and Hermia. . . . I suspect that *e* for *er* in the terminations of words is not an infrequent error in the old editions of our poets. . . . See I, i, 232, '*strange* companions'; though this perhaps might be accounted for otherwise. . . . The converse error also appears sometimes in the Folio, though, I think, less frequently. See III, i, 209: 'Tye vp my *louers* tongue, bring him silently.'—ABBOTT, § 504: There is difficulty in scanning this line. It is of course possible that 'kill-curt'sy' may have the accent on the first, but thus we shall have to accent the first 'this' and 'love' with undue emphasis. It is also more in Shakespeare's manner to give 'courtesy' its three syllables at the end of a line. I therefore scan: '(Near this) lăck-love, | thĭs kill | cŏurte | sў.' Perhaps, however, as in *Macb.* III, v, 34, 35, and ? 21, a verse of five accents is purposely introduced.—VERITY: Best scan the line as four iambic feet, thus: 'Near thĭs | lack-lŏve | , this klll- | court'sў.' The first *this* may be accented because said with emphatic contempt—Puck pointing at Lysander. The syllable that immediately

Churle, vpon thy eyes I throw 82
All the power this charme doth owe:
When thou wak'ſt, let loue forbid
Sleepe his ſeate on thy eye-lid. 85

82. *thy*] *the* F_3F_4.

82. [Squeezes the flower on Lysander's eyelids. Dyce.

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follows a strongly-accented syllable is liable to lose its own stress: hence the stress on *lòve*, not *lack*. Where a word occurs twice in the same line it is generally accented differently: hence the second *this* is unaccented, the stress falling on *kill* (which accentuation has also the merit that it varies the accent of the two compounds, *lack lòve—kìll-court'sy*). The last foot is simple. Shakespeare often introduces an iambic rhythm into a trochaic passage for the sake of variety; and this line treated thus as iambic will correspond with line 78, also four iambics. [I cannot believe that any scansion is worthy of consideration which subordinates to the rhythm the meaning and the force of words. The rhythm must emphasize the idea, not neglect it, still less mar it. In this line there are two compound words of emphatic vituperation, and in both the force lies in the first syllable, which must be accented, unless we are to make the rhythm superior to the sense. There is no necessity to convert, with Walker, 'Near' into *Nearer;* the sense does not demand it; but even if the sense does demand the comparative degree, we have that degree already in the very word itself, or with the *er* lying perdue if necessary in the final *r*, just as *This is* is delicately heard in 'This' a dull sight' (*Lear*, V, iii, 283), which is one of Walker's own excellent suggestions. Taking, therefore, the text as it stands, the rhythm and the sense are, in the first half of the line, with the strong accent where it belongs: 'Nèar this | làck-love.' The difficulty, then, is to scan the second half, which, if the trochaic measure is to be kept up, will bring the emphasis, or arsis, on 'this,' which is all right, but the thesis on 'kill,' which is all wrong. The solution which I find here is that neither from Puck's tongue nor from any one else's would these vehement compounds, 'lack-love' and 'kill-courtesy,' glide off glibly. No intelligent reader of the line but would instinctively pause before each of them, and in that pause before the second we may find the thesis of the foot of which 'this' is the arsis; and, after the pause, be ready for a new and emphatic arsis in 'kill.' If there be, after all, a certain harshness in thus reading the line, is it not in keeping? May we not imagine the indignant little sprite as uttering the words through almost clenched teeth, and with a spite to which the reduplicated *k*-sound in 'kill-curtesy,' corresponding to the pitying liquids in 'lack-love,' lends an emphasis? Wherefore the text of the Folio is right, I think, and waits for its harmony on the reader's voice.—ED.]

83. **owe**] Where this word occurs in *Othello*, STEEVENS observed that it means to *own*, to *possess*, whereupon PYE (p. 330) remarked, 'Very true; but do not explain it so often'; and I think Pye takes us all with him.—ED.

84, 85. **When . . . eye-lid**] DANIEL (p. 31): The only meaning that can attach to these lines, as they at present stand, is that when Lysander awakes, Love is to forbid Sleep to occupy his (Love's or Sleep's?) seat on Lysander's eye-lid. In other words, when Lysander awakes, he is no longer to be asleep! . . . Puck's intention in anointing the sleeper's eyes is clearly to make him fall in love with her whom he had hitherto contemned. Read, therefore, 'let love forbid *Keep* his seat,' &c. 'Forbid' here has the meaning of accursed, placed under an interdict, as in *Macbeth*, 'He

So awake when I am gone:
For I muſt now to *Oberon.* *Exit.*

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, ſweete *Demetrius.*
De. I charge thee hence, and do not haunt me thus.
Hel. O wilt thou darkling leaue me? do not ſo.
De. Stay on thy perill, I alone will goe.
Exit Demetrius.
Hel. O I am out of breath, in this fond chace,
The more my prayer, the leſſer is my grace,
Happy is *Hermia*, whereſoere ſhe lies;
For ſhe hath bleſſed and attractiue eyes.
How came her eyes ſo bright? Not with ſalt teares.
If ſo, my eyes are oftner waſht then hers.
No, no, I am as vgly as a Beare;
For beaſts that meete me, runne away for feare,
Therefore no maruaile, though *Demetrius*
Doe as a monſter, flie my preſence thus.
What wicked and diſſembling glaſſe of mine,

88. [Scene VII. Pope+.
89. *Stay*] *Say* Ff.
91. *darkling*] *Darling* F_4, Rowe.
93. Om. Qq.
96. *whereſoere*] *wherefore* F_4.
102. *maruaile*] *mavaile* F_2.

shall live a man forbid'; and the sense of the passage is that love, which was *forbid*, should, when the sleeper awoke, *keep his seat* or enthrone himself on his eye-lid. Compare *King John*, III, iii, 45: 'Making that idiot laughter *keep* men's eyes.' [I cannot think that emendation is necessary. Puck's charm is to awaken in Lysander such a feverish love that sleep will be banned from his eyes, a symptom of the passion common enough. If we adopt Daniel's change, Love must be exiled from its consecrated home, the heart, and seated, of all places in the world, on an eye-lid. —ED.]

91. **darkling**] STEEVENS: That is, in the dark. The word is likewise used by Milton. [*Par. Lost*, iii, 39: 'As the wakeful bird Sings darkling.'—W. A. WRIGHT.] The COWDEN-CLARKES (*Sh. Key*, p. 545): Besides its direct meaning of *in the dark*, 'darkling,' as Shakespeare employs it, includes the meaning of *baffled, deserted, bereft of light and help.* [Note the not unnatural—nay, almost plausible—sophistication,—*darling* of F_4 followed by Rowe, which is here recorded, I believe, for the first time.—ED.]

94. **fond**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, foolish, with perhaps something of the other meaning which the word now has.

100, 101. **Beare . . . feare**] Note again this rhyme.—ED.

103. **as a monster**] This refers not to Demetrius, but to Helena herself.

Made me compare with *Hermias* ſphery eyne?
But who is here? *Lyſander* on the ground;
Deade or aſleepe? I ſee no bloud, no wound,
Lyſander, if you liue, good ſir awake.
Lyſ. And run through fire I will for thy ſweet ſake.
Tranſparent *Helena*, nature her ſhewes art,
That through thy boſome makes me ſee thy heart.
Where is *Demetrius*? oh how fit a word
Is that vile name, to periſh on my ſword!
Hel. Do not ſay ſo *Lyſander*, ſay not ſo:
What though he loue your *Hermia*? Lord, what though?
Yet *Hermia* ſtill loues you; then be content.
Lyſ. Content with *Hermia*? No, I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her haue ſpent.

106. Lyſander] *Lysander!* Cap. et seq. (subs. except Coll. White i).
ground;] *ground?* Q_1, Coll. *grouud?* Q_2. *ground!* Cap. et seq.
107. *Deade*] *Dead!* Cap. et seq. (subs.).
109. *ſake.*] *sake*, Cap. (in Errata). [Waking. Rowe et seq. (subs.).
110. Helena,] *Helen*, Rowe ii+, Dyce ii, iii. *Helena!* Cap. et cet.
110. *nature her ſhewes*] *nature ſhewes* Qq, Cap. Mal.'90, Cam. White ii, Rolfe. *nature here ſhews* Ff, Rowe+, Steev. Coll. Dyce i. *Nature shows her* Var.'21, Knt, Hal. Sing. White i, Sta. Dyce ii, iii, Huds. Ktly.
111. *thy heart*] *my heart* Walker, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.
112. *is*] Om. Ff.

105. sphery] W. A. WRIGHT: 'Sphere' is used by Shakespeare to denote first the orbit in which a star moves, and then the star itself.

110. Helena] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 230): Read *Helen* [See Text. Notes], as in half a dozen other passages in the play. [So also, nine lines below Walker would read *Helen;* and again, 'to avoid the trisyllabic termination,' in III, ii, 337.]

110. her shewes] MALONE: Probably an error of the press for *shews her*.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Plainly but an accidental transposition. [Both of these remarks seem to me wrong; they quite remove the astonishment which Lysander expresses at the fact that *Nature* can show *art*. To me it is clear that we must read either with the Qq and retain 'Helena,' or hold 'her' to be a misprint (corrected in the following Ff) for *here*, and, with Walker, read 'Helen.'—ED.]

111. thy heart] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 300): Read, '*my* heart.' The old poetical commonplace; e. g. *As You Like It*, V, iv, 120: 'That thou mightst join her hand with his, Whose heart within her bosom is.' Compare *Sonnet* 133: 'Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward.'

112. Demetrius] TIESSEN (*Archiv f. n. Sp.*, &c., vol. lviii, p. 4, 1877): We would be grateful to editors if they would only tell us why the '*name*' of Demetrius should be thus referred to. Is there a covert reference to *demit*, i. e. to humble, to subject, or to *meat* which is stuck on a spit? [*i. e.* 'De-meat-rius,' I suppose. This insight of the way in which a learned German reads his Shakespeare would be interesting if it were not so depressing.—ED.]

Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* now I loue;
Who will not change a Rauen for a Doue?
The will of man is by his reaſon ſway'd:
And reaſon ſaies you are the worthier Maide.
Things growing are not ripe vntill their feaſon;
So I being yong, till now ripe not to reaſon,
And touching now the point of humane skill,
Reaſon becomes the Marſhall to my will,
And leades me to your eyes, where I orelooke
Loues ſtories, written in Loues richeſt booke.
Hel. Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?
When at your hands did I deſerue this ſcorne?
Iſt not enough, iſt not enough, yong man,
That I did neuer, no nor neuer can,
Deſerue a ſweete looke from *Demetrius* eye,
But you muſt flout my inſufficiency?
Good troth you do me wrong(good-ſooth you do)
In ſuch diſdainfull manner, me to wooe.
But fare you well; perforce I muſt confeſſe,
I thought you Lord of more true gentleneſſe.

119. Helena *now*] Q_2Ff, Var.'21, Sing. Knt, Hal. White i. *Helena* Q_1, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. Cap. Steev. Rann, Mal.'90, Sing. Coll. Dyce i, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii, Rolfe. *Helen now* Johns. Walker, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.
124. *ripe not*] *not ripe* Rowe ii, Pope, Han. *riped not* Schmidt.
125. *humane*] *human* Rowe et seq.
128. *Loues ſtories*] *Love-stories* Walker, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.
133. Demetrius] *Demetrius's* Rowe i. *Demetrius'* Rowe ii et seq.
134. *inſufficiency*] *inſufficency* Q_2.

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124. **ripe not**] STEEVENS: 'Ripe' is here a verb, as in *As You Like It*, II, vii, 26, 'And so from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe.'

125. **touching now the point**] STEEVENS: That is, my senses being now at the utmost height of perfection.—W. A. WRIGHT: Having reached the height of discernment possible to man.

120. **the Marshall**] JOHNSON: That is, my will now follows reason.

128. **Loues richest booke**] STEEVENS: So in *Rom. & Jul.* I, iii, 86: 'And what obscured in this fair volume lies, Find written in the margent of his eyes.'

131. It is not easy to decide whether these repetitions here, in the next line, and in line 135 are characteristic of Helena (in Shakespearian phrase, 'tricks' of hers) or are the effects of sobbing. I think that when Helena finds that to the scorn of Demetrius is added the scorn of Lysander (she has just said, 'Wherefore was I to *this* keen mockery born? When at *your* hands did I deserve this scorn?'), she bursts into uncontrollable tears. And yet there are somewhat similar repetitions in lines 114, 115, above, where is no question of tears, which sound weak, unless they be a trait of character.—ED.

Oh, that a Lady of one man refus'd,
Should of another therefore be abus'd. *Exit.*
Lyſ. She ſees not *Hermia* : *Hermia* ſleepe thou there,
And neuer maiſt thou come *Lyſander* neere;
For as a ſurfeit of the ſweeteſt things
The deepeſt loathing to the ſtomacke brings:
Or as the hereſies that men do leaue,
Are hated moſt of thoſe that did deceiue:
So thou, my ſurfeit, and my hereſie,
Of all be hated; but the moſt of me;
And all my powers addreſſe your loue and might,
To honour *Helen*, and to be her Knight. *Exit.*
Her. Helpe me *Lyſander*, helpe me; do thy beſt
To plucke this crawling ſerpent from my breſt.
Aye me, for pitty; what a dreame was here?
Lyſander looke, how I do quake with feare:
Me-thought a ſerpent eate my heart away,
And yet ſat ſmiling at his cruell prey.
Lyſander, what remoou'd? *Lyſander*, Lord,
What, out of hearing, gone? No ſound, no word?
Alacke where are you? ſpeake and if you heare:

141. *Hermia : Hermia*] *Hermia* F_3F_4. *Hermia.—Hermia* Coll.
144. *the*] *a* Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han.
146. *that*] *they* Qq, Rowe et seq.
149. *And all my powers*] *And, all my powers*, Han. Cap. et seq. (subs.).
your] *their* Coll. MS.
151. [Starting. Cap.
153. *Aye*] QqFf, Rowe+, White, Dyce, Cam. (subs.). *Ah* Cap. et cet.
154. *I do*] *do I* Pope, Han.
155. *eate*] *ate* Knt.
156. *yet ſat*] Ff, Rowe. *you ſate* Qq (*ſat* Q_2) et cet. (subs.).
157. Lyſander, *what*] Lyſander *what*, Q_1. *Lyſander! what* Rowe ii. *Lyſander! what*, Han. et seq.
158. *hearing, gone? No found,*] *hearing gone? No sound*, Theob. Warb. Johns. *hearing? gone? No sound?* Cap. (Errata) et seq. (subs.).
159. *and if*] *an if* Cap. et seq.

155. **eate**] WHITE (ed. i): The same form as here of the verb, and the same orthography is given elsewhere, which not only forbids us to read *ate*, but accords with the supposition that the present and preterite tenses were not distinguished even in pronunciation, but both had the pure sound of *e*. And yet the strong preterite—*ate*, is, of course, the older form.

156. **prey**] W. A. WRIGHT: Here used for the act of preying, as in *Macb.* III, ii, 53: 'Whiles nights black agents to their preys do rouse.'

159. **and if**] This is, I think, equivalent to something more than simply *if*; it is, at least, a strongly emphasized *if*. See ABBOTT, § 105, which assuredly applies to the present passage.—ED.

Speake of all loues ; I found almoſt with feare. 160
No, then I well perceiue you are not nye,
Either death or you Ile finde immediately. *Exit.* 162

Actus Tertius. [*Scene I.*]

Enter the Clownes.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat, and here's a maruailous conuenient place for our rehearſall. This greene plot ſhall be our 5
ſtage, this hauthorne brake our tyring houſe, and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the Duke. 7

160. *Speake of*] *Speake, of* Q_1, Cap. et seq.
found] *fwoune* Q_1. *fwound* Q_2 Ff, Rowe i, Hal. *swoon* Rowe ii et cet.
161. *No,*] *No?* Theob. Warb. et seq.
162. *Either*] *Or* Pope+, Cap. Steev. '85.
1. Om. Qq. Act III, Scene i. Rowe et seq. Act III, Sc. ii. Fleay. The Wood. Pope. The Same. Cap.
2. Enter...] Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snowt, and Starveling. The Queen of Fairies lying asleep. Rowe et seq. (subs. asleep, but invisible. Hal.).
4. *Pat*] *Par* F_2F_4.
maruailous] *maruailes* Q_1. *marvels* Cap.
5. *plot*] *plat* F_4, Rowe i.
6. *tyring houſe*] *'tiring-house* Coll.

160. **of all loues**] ABBOTT, § 169, 'of' is used in adjurations and appeals to signify *out of*. 'Of charity, what kin are you to me?'—*Twelfth Night*, V, i, 237. Hence, the sense of *out of* being lost, it is equivalent to *for the sake of, by*. [As in the present instance. HALLIWELL says that the phrase is of very common occurrence; he gives eight or nine examples, and the references to as many more.]

160. **sound**] As the Folio was set up by at least four different sets of compositors, it is irrational to expect any uniformity of spelling. Accordingly we find this word, besides its present form, spelled 'swoon,' 'swoone,' 'swowne.'—ED.

160. **almost**] For examples of similar transposition, see ABBOTT, § 29. The idiom of the language has somewhat changed since Shakespeare's day in regard to the position of this adverb. Again and again it is placed after the word it qualifies, when we should now place it before it; as here, where the position is quite independent of rhythm.—ED.

162. **Either**] See II, i, 31.

4. **maruailous**] CAMBRIDGE EDD.: Capell appears to have considered the reading of Q_1 as representing the vulgar pronunciation of 'marvellous,' and he therefore printed it 'marvels,' as in IV, i, 27.

6. **hauthorne-brake**] See line 75 *post*.

6. **tyring house**] COLLIER: That is, '*Attiring*-house,' the place where the actors attired themselves. Every ancient theatre had its 'tiring-room or 'tiring-house.

Bot. *Peter quince?*

Peter. What faiſt thou, bully *Bottome?*

Bot. There are things in this Comedy of *Piramus* and *Thisby*, that will neuer pleaſe. Firſt, *Piramus* muſt draw a ſword to kill himſelfe; which the Ladies cannot abide. How anſwere you that?

Snout. Berlaken, a parlous feare.

Star. I beleeue we muſt leaue the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit, I haue a deuice to make all well. Write me a Prologue, and let the Prologue ſeeme to ſay, we will do no harme with our ſwords, and that *Pyramus* is not kill'd indeede: and for the more better aſſurance, tell them, that I *Piramus* am not *Piramus*, but *Bottome* the Weauer; this will put them out of feare.

Quin. Well, we will haue ſuch a Prologue, and it ſhall be written in eight and ſixe.

8. Peter quince?] Q_2. Peeter Quince? Q_1. Peter Quince? Ff. Peter Quince— Theob. et seq. (subs.).

14. *Berlaken*] *Berlakin* Q_1. *By'rlaken* Pope. *By'r-lakin* Cap. *By'r lakin* Dyce.

14. *parlous*] *par'lous* Cap.

17. *deuice*] *deuiſe* Q_1.

18. *ſeeme*] *serve* Gould.

20. *the more better*] *the better* Rowe ii. *more better* Pope+.

9. **bully**] MURRAY (*N. E. D.* s. v.): Etymology obscure; possibly an adaptation of the Dutch *boel*, 'lover (of either sex),' also 'brother'; compare Middle High German *buole*, modern German *buhle*, 'lover,' earlier also 'friend, kinsman.' . . . A term of endearment and familiarity, originally applied to either sex; sweetheart, darling. Later, to men only, implying friendly admiration; good friend, fine fellow, 'gallant.' Often prefixed as a sort of title to the name or designation of the person addressed, as in 'bully Bottom,' 'bully doctor.' 1538, BALE, *Thre Lawes*, 475: 'Though she be sumwhat olde It is myne owne swete bullye, My muskyne and my mullye.'

10. **There are things**] WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 256): *Qu.* 'There are *three* things,' &c. See what follows. I think, indeed, it is required. [If anything may be said to be required in dealing with Bottom's logic or language.—ED.]

14. **Berlaken**] STEEVENS: That is, by our Ladykin, or little Lady. [The spelling is, probably, true to the pronunciation.]

14. **parlous**] STEEVENS: Corrupted from *perilous*.—HALLIWELL: It is used in the generic sense of *excessive*, and sometimes with the signification of *wonderful*. [See ABBOTT, § 461, for examples of many other words similarly contracted.]

17. **Not a whit**] W. A. WRIGHT: As 'not' is itself a contraction of *nâwiht* or *nawhit*, 'not a whit' is redundant.

18. **seeme to say**] W. A. WRIGHT: Compare Launcelot's language in *Mer. of Ven.* II, iv, 11: 'An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify.'

20. **more better**] For double comparatives, see ABBOTT, § 11.

Bot. No, make it two more, let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the Ladies be afear'd of the Lyon?

Star. I feare it, I promiſe you.

Bot. Maſters, you ought to conſider with your ſelues, to bring in(God ſhield vs)a Lyon among Ladies, is a moſt dreadfull thing. For there is not a more fearefull wilde foule then your Lyon liuing: and wee ought to looke to it.

Snout. Therefore another Prologue muſt tell he is not a Lyon.

Bot. Nay, you muſt name his name, and half his face muſt be ſeene through the Lyons necke, and he himſelfe muſt ſpeake through, ſaying thus, or to the ſame defect;

27. *afear'd*] *afraid* Rowe ii+.
29. *Maſters*] *Maiſters* Ff.
your ſelues,] *your ſelfe*, Qq. *yourſelves;* Rowe.
33. *to it*] *toote* Q_1. *to't* Cap. Sta. Cam. White ii.
37. *necke*] *mask* Gould.
38. *defect*] *deffect* Q_2.

24. **eight and sixe**] CAPELL refers this to the number of lines, fourteen, 'which,' as he says, 'is the measure of that time's sonnets; all Shakespeare's are writ in it.' 'Bottom wants it writ in "two more"; instead of which, when we come to 't, we find it just the same number less.'—MALONE interprets it as referring to the common ballad metre of 'alternate verses of eight and six syllables,' and this interpretation has been adopted. Capell assumes that we have this Prologue in Act V. Whereas, this special Prologue which Bottom calls for nowhere appears. It seems almost needless to call attention to the fact that this rehearsal does not correspond to the play as it is acted before the Duke. See note on line 84 below. If this were a genuine rehearsal of the play, its repetition at the public performance would be wearisome.—ED.

25, 26. **eight and eight**] HALLIWELL: An anonymous MS annotator alters this to *eighty-eight*, an evident blunder.

28. **I fear it**] It is almost foolish to attempt any emendation in the language of these clowns, but it seems not unlikely that this should be 'I, I fear it,' that is, 'Ay, I fear it.'—ED.

29. **selues, to bring**] W. A. WRIGHT: The construction here, with only a comma instead of a colon, is 'You ought to consider with yourselves (that) to bring in,' &c.

31. **dreadful thing**] MALONE finds 'an odd coincidence' here between this remark and an incident which happened, not in London, nor even in England, but in Scotland in 1594, at the christening of the eldest son of James the First. 'While the king and queen were at dinner a chariot was drawn in by "a black-moore. This chariot should have been drawne in by a lyon, but because his presence might have brought some feare to the nearest, or that the sights of the lights and the torches might have commoved his tameness, it was thought meete that the Moor should supply that room."' [—Reprinted in Somers's *Tracts*, ii, 179, W. A. Wright.]

Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wiſh you, or I would requeſt you, or I would entreat you, not to feare, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you thinke I come hither as a Lyon, it were pitty of my life. No, I am no ſuch thing, I am a man as other men are; and there indeed let him name his name, and tell him plainly hee is *Snug* the ioyner.

Quin. Well, it ſhall be ſo; but there is two hard things, that is, to bring the Moone-light into a chamber: for you know, *Piramus* and *Thisby* meete by Moone-light.

Sn. Doth the Moone ſhine that night wee play our play?

41. *hither*] *hether* Q_a.
42. *pitty*] *pittty* F_2.
44. *tell him*] *tell them* Qq, Rowe et seq. *'em* Anon. ap. Cam.
50. Sn.] Qq. Snout. Cam. Rlfe, White ii. Snug. Ff et cet.

42. of my life] ABBOTT, § 174: 'Of' passes easily from meaning *as regards* to *concerning, about* [as here, and also in line 188 of this scene: 'I desire you of more acquaintance,' and again in IV, i, 145: 'I wonder of there being here.']—W. A. WRIGHT: That is, it were a sad thing for my life, that is, for me. See V, i, 239. It would seem that in this expression 'of my life' is either all but superfluous or else a separate exclamation, as in *Merry Wives*, I, i, 40: 'Ha! o' my life, if I were young again, this sword should end it.' The phrase occurs again in *Meas. for Meas.* II, i, 77: 'It is pity of her life, for it is a naughty house.' And in the same play, II, iii, 42, compare ''Tis pity of him,' equivalent to, it is a sad thing for him.

44. name his name] MALONE: I think it not improbable that Shakespeare meant to allude to a fact which happened in his time at an entertainment exhibited before Queen Elizabeth. It is recorded in a MS collection of anecdotes, &c., entitled *Merry Passages and Jeasts*, MS Harl. 6395: 'There was a spectacle presented to Q: Elizabeth vpon the water and amongst others, Harr. Golding: was to represent Arion vpon the Dolphin's backe, but finding his voice to be very hoarse and vnpleasant when he came to performe it, he teares of his Disguise, and swears he was none of Arion not he, but eene honest Har. Goldingham; which blunt discoverie pleasd the Queene better, then if it had gone thorough in the right way; yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well.' [I have followed, in spelling and punctuation, W. A. Wright, who is here presumably more accurate than either Malone or Halliwell.—ED.] The collector appears to have been nephew to Sir Roger L'Estrange.—KNIGHT: This passage will suggest to our readers Sir Walter Scott's description of the pageant at Kenilworth, when Lambourne, not knowing his part, tore off his vizard and swore 'he was none of Arion or Orion either, but honest Mike Lambourne, that had been drinking her Majesty's health from morning till midnight.'

50. Sn.] Throughout this scene there appears to be but little uniformity in the spelling of the names of the characters. Quince is sometimes '*Quin.*' and sometimes '*Pet.*' Thisby is sometimes '*This.*' and sometimes '*Thys.*' At line 54 we have '*Enter Pucke,*' and at line 77 '*Enter Robin,*' as though it were another character,

Bot. A Calender, a Calender, looke in the Almanack, finde out Moone-ſhine, finde out Moone-ſhine.

Enter Pucke.

Quin. Yes, it doth ſhine that night.

Bot. Why then may you leaue a caſement of the great chamber window (where we play) open, and the Moone may ſhine in at the caſement.

Quin. I, or elſe one muſt come in with a buſh of thorns and a lanthorne, and ſay he comes to disfigure, or to preſent the perſon of Moone-ſhine. Then there is another thing, we muſt haue a wall in the great Chamber; for *Piramus* and *Thisby* (ſaies the ſtory) did talke through the chinke of a wall.

Sn. You can neuer bring in a wall. What ſay you *Bottome*?

Bot. Some man or other muſt preſent wall, and let him haue ſome Plaſter, or ſome Lome, or ſome rough caſt about him, to ſignifie wall; or let him hold his fin-

54. Enter Pucke] Ff, Om. Qq et cet.
56. Bot.] Cet. Q_1.
57. *great chamber window*] *great chamber-window* Knt. *great-chamber* Anon. ap. Cam.
59. *I,*] *Ay,* Rowe et seq.
65. Sn.] Q_2. Sno. Q_1. Snu. F_2. Snout. Cam. Rlfe, White ii. Snug. F_3F_4 et cet.
68. *Lome*] *lime* Coll. MS.
69. *or let*] *and let* Coll. MS, Dyce, Huds. Rlfe, White ii.

and as though Puck were not already there. Even the running title is '*A Midsomer nights Dreame.*' And there are trifling variations in the spelling of other names. Wherefore, when we have, as in the present instance, merely '*Sn.*' we are free to choose between *Snug* and *Snowt*. The $F_2F_3F_4$ adopted *Snug*, and nearly every editor has followed them. The CAMBRIDGE EDD. elected *Snowt*. It is a matter of small importance; indeed, the very word 'importance' is almost too strong to apply to the subject.—ED.

52. **Calender**] HALLIWELL asserts, but without giving his authority, that the calendars of Shakespeare's time were in 'even greater use than the almanacs of the present day, and were more frequently referred to.'—KNIGHT: The popular almanac of Shakespeare's time was that of Leonard Digges, the worthy precursor of the Moores and the Murphys. He had a higher ambition than these his degenerate descendants; for, while they prophecy only by the day and the week, he prognosticated *for ever*, as his title-page shows: 'A Prognostication *euerlastinge* of right good effect, fruictfully augmented by the auctour, contayning plain, briefe, pleasaunte, chosen rules to iudge the Weather by the Sunne, Moone, Starres, Comets, Rainebow, Thunder, Cloudes, with other extraordinarye tokens, not omitting the Aspects of the Planets, with a briefe iudgement *for euer*, of Plenty, Lucke, Sickenes, Dearth, Warres, &c., opening also many natural causes worthy to be knowen' (1575).

69. **or let him**] DYCE (ed. i): This mistake of 'or' for *and* was occasioned by

gers thus; and through that cranny, ſhall *Piramus* and *Thisby* whiſper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, ſit downe euery mothers ſonne, and rehearſe your parts. *Piramus*, you begin; when you haue ſpoken your ſpeech, enter into that Brake, and ſo euery one according to his cue.

Enter Robin.

Rob. What hempen home-ſpuns haue we ſwaggering here,
So neere the Cradle of the Faierie Queene?
What, a Play toward? Ile be an auditor,
An Actor too perhaps, if I ſee cauſe.

Quin. Speake *Piramus: Thisby* ſtand forth.

Pir. *Thisby*, the flowers of odious ſauors ſweete.

70. *that cranny*] *the cranny* Rowe+.
74. *Your*] *Yonr* Q_1.
77. Scene II. Pope+.
Enter Robin.] Enter Puck. Rowe et seq. (subs.). Enter Puck behind. Theob.
78, 79. *ſwaggering*] *ſwaggring* Qq.
80. *Faierie*] *Fairy* Qq.
81. *toward*] *tow'rd* Pope+.
82. *too perhaps*] *to perhappes* Q_1.
84, 86, 106. Pir.] Bot. Cam. Rlfe, White ii.
84. *ſlowers*] *ſlower* Pope+, Cap. Steev. '73, '78, '85.
ſauors] *savour's* Rowe, Pope. *savour* Hal.

'or' having occurred twice before. (It is but fair to Mr Collier's MS Corrector to mention that this mistake did not escape him.)

75. **Brake**] In defining this to be a 'thicket or furze-bush,' Steevens evidently supposed that it was different from the hawthorn brake before mentioned.—HUNTER (i, 295): Brake has many different senses. Here it is used for what was otherwise called a *frame*, a little space with rails on each side, which, in this instance, were formed or at least intertwined with hawthorn. . . . See notice of the 'frame or brake' in Barnaby Googe's *Book of Husbandry*, 1614, p. 119.—HALLIWELL: Kennett, MS Lansd. 1033, defines *brake*, 'a small plat or parcel of bushes growing by themselves.' This seems to be the right meaning here, although a single bush is also called a *brake*. . . . The *brake* mentioned by Barnaby Googe would only be found in cultivated land, not in the centre of the 'palace wood.'

76. **cue**] MURRAY (*N. E. D.* s. v.): Origin uncertain. It has been taken as equivalent to French *queue*, on the ground that it is the tail or ending of the preceding speech; but no such use of *queue* has ever obtained in French (where 'cue' is called *réplique*), and no literal sense of *queue* or *cue* leading up to this appears in 16th century English. On the other hand, in the 16th and early 17th centuries it is found written *Q*, *q*, *q.*, or *qu*, and it was explained by 17th century writers as a contraction for some Latin word (sc. *qualis*, *quando*), said to have been used to mark in actors' copies of plays the points at which they were to begin. But no evidence confirming this has been found.

84, &c. The speeches delivered at this rehearsal do not afterwards appear when

Quin. Odours, odours.
Pir. Odours ſauors ſweete,
So hath thy breath, my deareſt *Thisby* deare.
But harke, a voyce : ſtay thou but here a while,
And by and by I will to thee appeare. *Exit. Pir.*
Puck. A ſtranger *Piramus*, then ere plaid here.

85. *Odours, odours*] *Odours, odorous* Qq.
87. *hath*] *that* Rowe i. *doth* Rowe ii+, Cap. Steev.
After this, a line lost. Wagner conj.
88. *a while*] *a whit* Theob. Han. Warb. Johns. Cap.
89. Exit Pir.] Exit. Qq.
90. Puck.] Quin. Qq. [Aside. Pope+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Hal. Coll. (MS).
[Exit. Cap. et seq.

the play is performed before the Duke.—SIMPSON (*School of Shakspere*, ii, p. 88) finds in this lack of correspondence a precedent for the same lack in the Play within the Play of *Histrio-Mastix* (pp. 32–39, ed. Simpson), and asks, 'Was the *Midsummer Night's* the provocative of the *Histrio-Mastix?* Who was the author of the *Pyramus and Thisbe* there parodied?'

84. **of odious sauors**] COLLIER (ed. i): Possibly we ought to read 'the flowers *have* odours, savours sweet, or '*odorous* savours sweet.'—*Ib.* (ed. ii): The MS has 'flowers *have* odious savours sweet,' and rightly, as the next line of the supposed tragedy demonstrates, 'So *hath* thy breath,' &c. The corruption has been 'of' for *have;* unless we are to suppose it to be one of the blunders of the 'hempen-homespuns.'

84. **sauors**] This singular here used after a plural nominative, may have been perhaps intended, says ABBOTT, § 333, to be a sign of low breeding and harsh writing in this play of *Pyramus and Thisbe.* See III, ii, 466: 'Two of both kindes makes up foure.' [But compare R. G. White's note on 'gallantly,' I, ii, 26; and also the next note below by the learned German to whom we owe the *Lexicon.*]

84. **sweete**] SCHMIDT (*Programm*, &c., p, 4): However absurd may be the poesy of these Clowns, in rhythm and grammar it is irreproachable, therefore 'hath' in line 87 cannot be right. In Shakespearian dialogue (*dialogue*, be it observed) it is an inviolable rule that in alternate rhymes, when the second and fourth verses rhyme, the first and the third rhyme likewise. A sequence of endings like *sweet . . . dear . . . while . . . appear* violates Shakespear's use and wont. Wherefore, either *sweet* or *awhile* must be corrupt, probably the former. It is conceivable that Peter Quince, presumably the author of this tragedy of 'Pyramus and Thisbe,' wanted to say more, in his hyperbolic style, than that Thisbe's breath equalled in sweetness the odours of flowers,—odour did not amount to much, it is too commonplace; we shall enter into his spirit if we read: 'Thisbe, the flowers of odours' savour's *vile* (*or:* the odorous flowers' savour's vile), So *not* thy breath,' &c.

88. **while**] THEOBALD changed this to *whit*, in order to rhyme with 'sweete,' and the change is harmless enough if there be a single uncouthness here which is not intentional.—MALONE goes even further, and supposes that two lines have been lost, one to rhyme with 'sweete' and another with 'while.'—ED.

89, 90. **And . . . here**] JULIUS HEUSER (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, xxviii, p. 207): These two lines form a so-called *capping verse*, that is, a verse which contains a response to what precedes, although the speaker has not been directly questioned. They are

Thiſ. Muſt I ſpeake now? 91
Pet. I marry muſt you. For you muſt vnderſtand he goes but to ſee a noyſe that he heard, and is to come a-gaine.
Thyſ. Moſt radiant *Piramus*, moſt Lilly white of hue, 95
Of colour like the red roſe on triumphant bryer,
Moſt brisky Iuuenall, and eke moſt louely Iew,
As true as trueſt horſe, that yet would neuer tyre,
Ile meete thee *Piramus*, at *Ninnies* toombe.
Pet. *Ninus* toombe man: why, you muſt not ſpeake 100
that yet; that you anſwere to *Piramus*: you ſpeake all your part at once, cues and all. *Piramus* enter, your cue is paſt; it is neuer tyre. 103

91, 95, 104. Thiſ.] Flu. Cam. Rlſe, White ii.
92, 100, 107. Pet.] Quin. Q_1, Rowe et seq.
97. *brisky Iuuenall*] *brisky Juvenile* Rowe ii+. *Briskly Juvenile* Han.
100. *why,*] *Why?* Q_1.
103. [Enter Pyramus. Rowe, Pope. Re-enter Bottom with an Ass-head. or, Puck and Bottom... Theob.Warb. Johns. Steev. Mal. Knt, Coll. White i, Sta.

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generally in rhyme and are supposed to have a comic effect. [For this 'so-called *capping verse*' which, I think, appears here in literature for the first time, Simpson is indirectly responsible; its definition is Heuser's own. In Simpson's edition of *Faire Em* (*School of Sh.* ii, 422) he gives a collation with the Bodleian text of certain rhymes made by Fair Em and Trotter, and remarks that they are defective 'according to all rules of capping verses.' This remark ELZE quoted (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, xv, 344) in his notes on *Faire Em*, and added humourously that in Rowley's *When You See me You Know me* we had to deal with *rime couée*. This 'capped rhyme,' I am afraid, misled Heuser, to whom apparently the phrase 'to cap verses' was unfamiliar, and hence he supposed that there is a certain style of verse called 'capping.'—ED.]

90. **Puck**] Note that the Qq have *Quin.*, a serious blunder, whereof the correction adds much to the value which we should attach to the text of F_1. In a modernised text, I think, a period and a dash should close the preceding line, and a dash commence the present, so as to join the two speeches, and make Puck's the continuation, in sense, of Pyramus's: 'And by and by I will to thee appear,——a stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here!' adds Puck in anticipation of the Ass-head which he was about to apply. (I find, by a MS marginal note, that I am herein anticipated by ALLEN.)—ED.

97. **Iuuenall**] W. A. WRIGHT: See *Love's Lab. L.* I, ii, 8, where this word again occurs; it was affectedly used, and appears to have been designedly ridiculed by Shakespeare.

97. **eke**] HALLIWELL: This word was becoming obsolete, and is used by Shakespeare only in burlesque passages.

102. **cues and all**] STAUNTON: To appreciate the importance of *cues* it must be borne in mind that when the 'parts' or written language of a new play are distributed, each performer receives only what he has himself to recite; consequently, if this

Thyf. O, as true as trueſt horſe, that yet would neuer tyre:

Pir. If I were faire, *Thisby* I were onely thine.

Pet. O monſtrous. O ſtrange. We are hanted; pray maſters, flye maſters, helpe.

The Clownes all Exit.

Puk. Ile follow you, Ile leade you about a Round,

104. *O, as*] *O,—As* Theob. et seq. (subs.).
105. *tyre:*] *tyre.* Qq.
[Re-enter Bottom with an Ass's head. Han. Re-enter Puck and Bottom... Cap. Dyce, Cam. White ii.
106. *I were faire, Thisby*] Q_2Ff. *I were, fair Thisby*, Mal. conj. Coll. Hal. *I were fair Thisby*, White i. *I were so, fair Thisby*, Ktly. *I were fair, fair Thisby* Anon. ap. Cam. *I were fairer* Schmidt. *I were faire, Thisby*, Q_x et cet.
107. *hanted*] *haunted* Qq.
109. The...Exit.] Om. Qq. The... Exeunt. F_3F_4.
110. Puk.] Rob. Qq.
about] *'bout* Walker, Dyce ii, iii.

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were unaccompanied by *cues* or catchwords from the other parts, he would be utterly at a loss to know either when to make his entrance on the scene or to join in the dialogue.

106. **I were faire, Thisby**] MALONE: Perhaps we ought to point thus: 'If I were, [*i. e.* as true, &c.] fair Thisbe, I were only thine.'—STAUNTON, after quoting this remark of Malone, replies: There cannot be a doubt of it, if we absolutely insist upon making bully Bottom speak sensibly, which Shakespeare has taken some pains to show he was never designed to do.—HUDSON (p. 121) even mends the metre, and reads: '*An* if I were,' &c. He thinks the punctuation of the Folio is 'rather too fine-drawn to be appreciated on the stage. Perhaps we ought to read, "If I were *true*, fair Thisbe," &c., which is the meaning, either way, as the words are spoken in reply to Thisbe's "As true as truest horse," &c.'

110. **a Round**] That is, a dance, but probably of a more fantastic and less orderly style than that to which Titania invites Oberon when she asks him to 'dance patiently in our round,' II, i, 145. The phrase 'to lead about a Round' has, however, an uncouth sound; 'about' certainly seems superfluous, or almost tautological. Is it permissible to suppose that 'a round' is one word, *around*, and that in view of the enumeration in the next five lines of the separate distresses, may not Puck have begun this enumeration here: 'I'll follow you—I'll lead you—about—around—.'? The objection, almost a fatal one, to this reading is that nowhere is this word *around* to be found, either in Shakespeare or in the Bible, 1611. But, as W. A. Wright says in regard to *steppe*, II, i, 73, 'there is certainly no *a priori* reason why' the present passage 'should not furnish' an instance of it; the word itself, although not in the sense which I here ascribe to it, is, according to Murray (*N. E. D.* s. v.), as old as *c.* 1300, and is used by Spenser, 'The fountaine where they sat arounde.'—*Shep. Cal.* June 30, and elsewhere. Wherefore the word itself, as an adverb, is not an anomaly. As a preposition it is used by Milton in the sense here claimed for it as an adverb, and the following example is given by Murray under the definition 'On all sides of, in all directions from'; 'They around the flag Of each his faction . . . Swarm populous.'—*Par. Lost*, II, 900. That there is need of such an adverb is proved by the examples

Through bogge, through buſh, through brake, through
Sometime a horſe Ile be, ſometime a hound: (bryer,
A hogge, a headleſſe beare, ſometime a fire,
And neigh, and barke, and grunt, and rore, and burne,
Like horſe, hound, hog, bèare, fire, at euery turne. *Exit.*

Enter Piramus with the Aſſe head.

Bot. Why do they run away? This is a knauery of them to make me afeard. *Enter Snowt.*

111. *Through bogge, through bush,*] *Thro' brook, thro bog*, Peck. *Through bog, through mire, through bush*, Johns. conj. *Through bog, through burn, through bush*, Ritson. *Through bog, through brook, through bush* Lettsom ap. Dyce, Marshall.
buſh] *bnſh* F_3.

112. *Sometime*] *Sometimes* F_4, Rowe+.
ſometime] *ſometimes* F_3F_4, Rowe+.

113. *headleſſe*] *heedless* Del. conj. *curbless* Gould.
ſometime] *ſometimes* F_4, Johns.

116. Enter...] Om. Qq. Enter Bottom with an Ass Head. Rowe, Pope.

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of its use by eminent modern writers, as collected in the *N. E. D.* All that is humbly urged for it here is that it may receive the stamp of respectability by admission to Shakespeare's vocabulary.—ED.

112, 113. COLLIER and HALLIWELL appeal to sundry popular ballads as authority for these transformations.

114, 115. Note the pelting, rattling staccato, which sounds like the explosion of a pack of Chinese firecrackers, at the heels of the flying clowns?—ED.

116. **Enter**, &c.] It is needless to call attention to the patent dislocation of this stage-direction.—B. NICHOLSON (*N. & Qu.* 4th Ser. V, 56) justifies its present position on the ground that according to line 109 all the clowns, Pyramus included, had rushed off, and for '*Enter*' we should here read *Re-enter*. But no trust is to be placed in the stage-directions on this imperfectly printed page of the Folio, where, at line 54, we have '*Enter Pucke*,' who says no word for more than twenty lines nor goes out, and yet, at line 77, we have '*Enter Robin*.' It is, however, a simple matter to arrange the present action; we have Puck's account of it all in III, ii, 21, and by it we know that Pyramus enters with the ass's head after line 105.—ED.

116. **the Asse head**] I cannot but think that this trifling expression stamps this stage-direction as taken from a play-house copy. See *Preface*.—ED.

116. **Asse head**] 'If I affirme, that with certeine charmes and popish praiers I can set an horsse or an asses head upon a mans shoulders, I shall not be beleeved; or if I doo it, I shall be thought a witch. And yet if *J. Bap. Neap.* experiments be true, it is no difficult matter to make it seeme so; and the charme of a witch or papist joined with the experiment, will also make the woonder seeme to proceed thereof. The words used in such case are uncerteine, and to be recited at the pleasure of the witch or cousener. But the conclusion is this: Cut off the head of a horsse or an asse (before they be dead), otherwise the vertue or strength thereof will be the lesse effectuall, and make an earthen vessell of fit capacitie to conteine the same, and let it be filled with the oile and fat thereof: cover it close, and dawbe it over with lome: let it boile over a soft fier three daies continuallie, that the flesh boiled may run into oile, so as the bare bones may be seene: beate the haire into powder, and mingle the

Sn. O *Bottom*, thou art chang'd; What doe I ſee on thee? 120

Bot. What do you ſee? You ſee an Aſſe-head of your owne, do you? 122

120. *thee?*] *thee? An Ass's head?* Johns. conj. [Exit. Cap. Exit frightened. Coll.

121. *Aſſe-head*] *ass's head* Var.'03, '13, '21, Sing. i.

122. [Exit Snout. Dyce, Cam.

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same with the oile; and annoint the heads of the standers by, and they shall seeme to have horsses or asses heads.'—Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, 1584, p. 315, ed. Nicholson.—That this was the passage whence Shakespeare took the idea of fixing an ass's head on Bottom was suggested first by DOUCE, i, 192, and the suggestion has been since then generally adopted.—B. NICHOLSON, however, is inclined to think (*N. & Qu.* 6th Ser. IV, 2) that a previous passage (p. 99, ed. Nicholson) gave the first and greater foundation to work upon. "The bodie of man is subject to . . . sicknesses and infirmities whereunto an asses body is not inclined; and man's body must be fed with bread, &c, and not with hay. *Bodins* asseheaded man must either eat haie or nothing; as appeareth by the storie." Nicholson thinks that this eating hay is very likely to have suggested Bottom's 'great desire to a bottle of hay'; and furthermore, both passages from Scot, especially the former, 'show that Shakspeare here introduced no unknown creature of his imagination, but brought before his audiences one which they had known by report. It was not the creature so much as his walking and talking as set forth, that made it supremely ridiculous.'—THOMS, also (*Three Notelets*, p. 68), infers from Scot that 'the possibility of such transformations was in Shakespeare's day an article of popular belief.' Bodin's story is to be found on p. 94 of Scot, ed. 1584, wherein a young man, as in Apuleius, was changed completely into an ass.—STEEVENS: The metamorphosis of Bottom's head might have been suggested by a trick mentioned in the *History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Dr. John Faustus*, chap. xliii:—'The guests having sat, and well eat and drank, Dr. Faustus made that every one had an ass's head on, with great and long ears, so they fell to dancing, and to drive away the time until it was midnight, and then every one departed home, and as soon as they were out of the house, each one was in his natural shape, and so they ended and went to sleep.'—DOUCE refers to a receipt for this metamorphosis in Albertus Magnus *de Secretis Naturæ*, of which there was an English translation printed at London by William Copland. This receipt is thus given by W. A. WRIGHT (it is much less elaborate than Scot's, and really places the experiment within reach of the humblest): 'If thou wilt that a mans head seeme an Asse head. Take vp the couering of an Asse & anoint the man on his head.'

120. thee?] JOHNSON: It is plain by Bottom's answer, that Snout mentioned an *ass's head*. Therefore we should read: 'what do I see on thee? *An ass's head?*'—HALLIWELL: This suggestion by Dr Johnson is not necessary, the phrase being a vernacular one of the day, and originally in the present place created probably great amusement when thus spoken by Bottom in his translated shape. Mrs Quickly, in the *Merry Wives*, says, 'You shall have a fool's head of your own.' According to Pinkerton, 'The phrase—You see an ass's head of your own; do you?—is a trite vulgarism, when a person expresses a foolish amazement at some trifling oddity in another's dress or the like.'

Enter Peter Quince. 123

Pet. Bleſſe thee *Bottome*, bleſſe thee; thou art tranſlated. *Exit.* 125

Bot. I ſee their knauery; this is to make an aſſe of me, to fright me if they could; but I will not ſtirre from this place, do what they can. I will walke vp and downe here, and I will ſing that they ſhall heare I am not afraid. 130

The Wooſell cocke, ſo blacke of hew,
With Orenge-tawny bill.
The Throſtle, with his note ſo true,
The Wren and little quill.

Tyta. What Angell wakes me from my flowry bed? 135

Bot. The Finch, the Sparrow, and the Larke,
The plainſong Cuckow gray; 137

125. Exit.] Exit frightened. Coll. Exeunt Snout and Quince. Sta.
129. *I will*] *will* F_3F_4, Rowe i.
130. [Sings. Pope et seq.
131. *Wooſell cocke*] *Wooſel cock* F_4, Rowe. *Ousel cock* Pope+. *ouzel cock* Cap. *oosel-cock* Steev.
132. *Orenge*] *Orange* Qq, Rowe ii et seq.
133. *with*] *will* F_4, Rowe i.
134. *and*] *with* Qq, Pope et seq.
quill.] *quill;* Cap. et seq.
135. [waking. Rowe. Sings waking. Pope.
136. Sings. Theob. et seq.

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129. **they shall**] For other examples of the future where we should use the infinitive or subjunctive, see ABBOTT, § 348.

131. **Woosel Cocke**] W. A. WRIGHT: The male blackbird. The word in the Ff and Qq is probably the same as French *oiseau*, of which the old form was *oisel*. Cotgrave gives, 'Merle: m. A Mearle, Owsell, Blackbird. Merle noir. The Blackbird, or ordinarie Owsell.' [For further ornithological discussion, of great interest, doubtless, to British naturalists, the student is referred to the voluminous notes of HALLIWELL, STEEVENS, DOUCE, and COLLIER. HARTING'S decision (p. 139) that the owzel-cock is the *Turdus merula*, and Cotgrave's definition, are ample for us in this country, and perhaps for all others elsewhere.—ED.]

133. **Throstle**] HARTING (p. 137): It is somewhat singular that the thrush (*Turdus musicus*), a bird as much famed for song as either the nightingale or the lark, has been so little noticed by Shakespeare. We have failed to discover more than three passages in which this well-known bird is mentioned. [The spelling 'Trassell,' in the Qq and F_1 of *The Mer. of Ven.* I, ii, 58 (of this ed.), probably, with a broad *a*, gives the pronunciation.—ED.]

134. **and little quill**] Remembering that it is Bottom who is singing, I cannot but think it needless to change 'and' to *with*, as the Qq read. Of course, 'quill' here means *pipe* or *note*.—ED.

137. **plainsong**] CHAPPELL (p. 51, footnote): Prick-song meant harmony written or pricked down, in opposition to plain-song, where the descant rested with the will

Whoſe note full many a man doth marke,
And dares not anſwere, nay.
For indeede, who would ſet his wit to ſo fooliſh a bird?
Who would giue a bird the lye, though he cry Cuckow, neuer ſo?

Tyta. I pray thee gentle mortall, ſing againe,
Mine eare is much enamored of thy note;
On the firſt view to ſay, to ſweare I loue thee.
So is mine eye enthralled to thy ſhape.
And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth moue me.

Bot. Me-thinkes miſtreſſe, you ſhould haue little reaſon for that: and yet to ſay the truth, reaſon and loue keepe little company together, now-adayes. The more the pittie, that ſome honeſt neighbours will

139. *nay.*] *nay;*— Cap. et seq.
144. *enamored*] *enamoured* Q_2F_4. *enamour'd* Rowe et seq.
145. Transposed to follow line 147, Q_1, Theob. et seq.
145. *to ſweare*] *to swear*, Theob. et seq.
147. *vertues*] *vertue's* Rowe ii et seq. *virtue*, Coll. conj.
doth] *do* Thirlby.
148. *miſtreſſe*] *maiſtreſſe* Ff.

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of the singer. Thus the florid counterpoint in use in churches is slyly reproved in *The Four Elements*, circa 1517: '*Humanity*. Peace, man, prick-song may not be despised For therewith God is well pleased, In the church oft times among. *Ignorance*. Is God well pleased, trow'st thou, thereby? Nay, nay, for there is no reason why, For is it not as good to say plainly, Give me a spade, As give me a spa, ve, va, ve, va, ve, vade?'[—p. 49, ed. Hazlitt. T. WARTON, apparently misled by the word 'plain,' supposed that 'plain-song' meant 'having no variety of strains,' or having 'the uniform modulation of the chant,' and herein he is followed by DYCE and R. G. WHITE. HARTING, however, gives a different character to the Cuckoo's song; of this present line he says, p. 150:] The cuckoo, as long ago remarked by John Heywood, begins to sing early in the season with the interval of a minor third; the bird then proceeds to a major third, next to a fourth, then to a fifth, after which its voice breaks, without attaining a minor sixth. It may, therefore, be said to have done much for musical science, because from this bird has been derived the minor scale, the origin of which has puzzled so many; the cuckoo's couplet being the minor third sung downwards.

139. nay] HALLIWELL: Bottom here refers to an opinion very prevalent in Shakespeare's time that the unfaithfulness of a wife was always guided by a destiny which no human power could avert.

140. set his wit to] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, would match his wit against. So *Tro. and Cres.* II, i, 94: 'Will you set your wit to a fool's?'

145–147. See Text. Notes for the proper order of these lines.

149. reason and loue] VERITY: Compare the old proverb that 'a man cannot love and be wise,' from the maxim, *amare et sapere vix deo conceditur.*

not make them friends. Nay, I can gleeke vpon occa- 152
ſion.

Tyta. Thou art as wiſe, as thou art beautifull.

Bot. Not ſo neither: but if I had wit enough to get 155
out of this wood, I haue enough to ſerue mine owne
turne.

Tyta. Out of this wood, do not deſire to goe,
Thou ſhalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a ſpirit of no common rate: 160
The Summer ſtill doth tend vpon my ſtate,

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152. **gleeke**] POPE: Joke or scoff.—BOSWELL: See Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*, s. v. *Glaik*, *s.* [where the first meaning is: 'The reflection of the rays of light on the roof or wall of a house, or on any other object, from a lucid body in motion. Hence, to *cast the glaiks on* one, to make the reflection fall on one's eyes so as to confound and dazzle.' The third meaning is: 'A deception or trick. *To play the glaiks with* one, to gull, to cheat. . . . This sense would suggest that it is radically the same with North of England *gleek*, to deceive, to beguile, as it is used by Shakespeare, "I can *gleek* upon occasion"; Lambe thinks it has been improperly rendered *joke* or *scoff*.' Jamieson's definition of the verb, however, viz. 'to trifle with, to spend time idly or playfully,' does not greatly vary from that of POPE, NARES, DYCE, STAUNTON, COLLIER, W. A. WRIGHT, and others, who define 'gleek' as *scoffing*, *jesting*, &c., a meaning which is certainly borne out in the only other passage where it is used as a verb in Shakespeare. Gower, in referring to Pistol's treatment of Fluellen, says to the former, 'I have seen you gleeking and galling at this gentleman twice or thrice.' —*Hen. V:* V, i, 78. The COWDEN-CLARKES (*Sh. Key*, p. 39) thus define the word: 'That is, *gibe*, *jeer*; in modern slang, *chaff*. The expression originated in the name for a game of cards, called "gleek," in which game "a gleek" was the term for a set of three particular cards; "to gleek," for gaining an advantage over; and "to be gleeked," for being tricked, cheated, duped, or befooled. Hence the words "gleek" and "gleeking" became used for being tauntingly or hectoringly jocose.' But, after all, is it worth while to strain after any exact meaning in Bottom's words? Did he, more than nebulously, know his own meaning? STAUNTON says: 'The all-accomplished Bottom is boasting of his versatility. He has shown, by his last profound observation on the disunion of love and reason, that he possesses a pretty turn for the didactic and sententious; but he wishes Titania to understand that upon fitting occasion he can be as waggish as he has just been grave.' To which W. A. WRIGHT replies: 'But a "gleek" is rather a satirical than a waggish joke, and in this vein Bottom flatters himself he has just been rather successfully indulging.' Whatever the meaning of 'gleek,' I think it is clear that Bottom refers to what he has just said, not to what he may say in the future. It is perhaps worth while merely to note that in the Opera of *The Fairy-Queen*, 1692, Bottom says here, instead of 'gleek,' 'Nay I can break a Jest on occasion.' Garrick in his version, 1763, retained 'gleek.'—ED.]

160, 161. **I am . . . state**] FLEAY (*Life & Work*, p. 181): These lines are so closely like those in Nash's *Summer's Last Will*, where Summer says: 'Died had I indeed unto the earth, But that Eliza, England's beauteous Queen, *On whom all*

And I doe loue thee ; therefore goe with me,
Ile giue thee Fairies to attend on thee;
And they ſhall fetch thee Iewels from the deepe,
And ſing, while thou on preſſed flowers doſt ſleepe:
And I will purge thy mortall groſſeneſſe ſo,
That thou ſhalt like an airie ſpirit go.

Enter Peaſe-bloſſome, Cobweb, Moth, Muſtard-ſeede, and foure Fairies.

Fai. Ready; and I, and I, and I, Where ſhall we go?

165. *doſt*] *doth* F_3F_4, Rowe i.
167. [Scene III. Pope+.
168, 169. Enter Peaſe-bloſſome...Muſtard-ſeede,] Peaſe-bloſſome...*and* Muſtard ſeede? (Continued to Titania.) Qq, Theob. et seq.
168. Moth] *Mote* White.
169. and four Fairies.] Enter four Fairies. Qq, Theob. et seq.
170. Fai.] Fairies. Qq.
Fai. *Ready; and I, and I,*] 1. Fair. *Ready.* 2. Fair. *And I.* 3. Fair. *And I.* Rowe et seq. Peas-blossom. *Ready.* Cobweb. *And I.* Mote. *And I.* White, Dyce (subs.).
170. *and I, Where ſhall we go?*] 4. Fair. *And I. Where shall we go?* Rowe+. 4. Fai. *Where shall we go?* Farmer, Steev. '93, Coll. Mustard-seed. *And I.* All. *Where shall we go?* White, Dyce (subs.). 4. *And I.* All. *Where shall we go?* Cap. et cet. (subs.).

seasons prosperously attend, Forbad the execution of my fate,' &c., that I think they are alluded to by Shakespeare.

161. still] Always.

168. **Moth**] R. G. WHITE: This is the invariable spelling of *mote* in the old copies, as, for instance, in this play, V, i, 322. The editors, not having noticed this orthography or that 'moth' was pronounced *mote* in Shakespeare's day, Fairy *Mote* has been hitherto presented as Fairy *Moth*. [In his *Introduction* to *Much Ado*, and in his note on 'Enter Armado and Moth,' in *Love's Lab. L.* I, ii, R. G. White has gathered the following instances in proof of the old pronunciation of *th*: 'I am here with thee and thy goats as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths.'—*As You Like It*, III, iii, 7; 'You found his Moth, the King your Moth did see; but I a beame doe finde in each of three.'—*Love's Lab. L.* IV, iii, 161; 'O heaven, that there were but a moth in yours [*sc.* eye].'—*King John*, IV, i, 92. Wicliff wrote, in *Matthew* vi, 'were rust and *mought* distryeth.' To these examples he adds in the present note:] From Withal's *Shorte* [Latin] *Dictionarie for Young Beginners*, London, 1568: 'A moth or motte that eateth clothes, *tinea*.'—fol. 7 a; 'A barell or greate bolle, *Tina, næ. Sed tinea, cum e, vermiculus est, anglicè*, A mought.' —fol. 43 a; and this from Lodge's *Wits Miserie*, 'They are in the aire like *atomi in sole*, mothes in the sun.' [In his *Memorandums of Eng. Pronunciation*, &c., Shakespeare's Works, xii, p. 431, White has collected many more examples, such as: *nostrils*, nosethrills; *apotecary*, apothecary; *autority*, authority; *t'one*, the one; *t'other*, the other; *swarty*, swarthy; *fift*, fifth; *sixt*, sixth; *Sathan*, Satan; *Antony*, Anthony; *wit*, withe [an interesting example, by which alone can be explained the pun in *Love's Lab. L.* I, ii, 94, 'green wit']; *pother*, pudder, potter; *noting*, nothing [White contends that the title of the play should be pronounced *Much Ado about*

Tita. Be kinde and curteous to this Gentleman, 171
Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eies,
Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,
With purple Grapes, greene Figs, and Mulberries,
The honie-bags ſteale from the humble Bees, 175
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighes,
And light them at the fierie-Glow-wormes eyes, 177

172. *gambole*] *gambol* Cap.
175. *The*] *Their* Coll. MS.
177. *wormes*] *worms'* Kinnear.

Noting]; *With Sundayes*, Whit Sundays, &c., &c.—A. J. ELLIS, after a thorough discussion of this memorandum of White, comes to this temperate general conclusion (*Early Eng. Pronun.* p. 972): 'There does not appear to be any reason for concluding that the genuine English *th* ever had the sound of *t*, although some final *t*'s have fallen into *th*. As regards the alternate use of *d* and *th* in such words as *murther, further, father*, &c., there seems reason to suppose that both sounds existed, as they still exist, dialectically, vulgarly, and obsolescently.' As regards the name of the little Fairy now present, however, I have no doubt that R. G. White is entirely right.—ED.

170. R. G. WHITE was the first to substitute the fairies' names, instead of numerals, before each repetition of 'and I.'—CAPELL was the first editor to mark that 'All' united in the question 'Where shall we go?' Chronologically, he was anticipated in *The Fairy-Queen, An Opera*, 1692.

173. Apricocks] W. A. WRIGHT: This is the earlier and more correct spelling of *apricots*. The word has a curious history. In Latin the fruit was called *praecoqua* (Martial, *Epig.* xiii, 46) or *praecocia* (Pliny, *H. N.* xv, 11), from being early ripe; Dioscorides (i, 165) called it in Greek πραικόκια. Hence, in Arabic, it became *barquq* or *birquq*, and with the article *al-barquq* or *al-birquq*; Spanish, *albarcoque*; Italian, *albricocco* (Torriano); French, *abricot*; and English, *abricot, abricoct* (Holland's *Pliny*, xv, 11), *apricock*, or *apricot*.

173. Dewberries] HALLIWELL cites Parkinson's *Theatrum Botanicum*, 1640, wherein the 'Deaw-berry or Winberry' is the *Rubus tricoccos*, and quotes a long description. 'Other writers,' he adds, 'make it synonymous with the dwarf mulberry or knotberry, *Rubus chamæmorus*, and it is worth remarking that this fruit is still called the dewberry by the Warwickshire peasantry. It is exceedingly plentiful in the lanes between Stratford-on-Avon and Aston Cantlowe.'—W. A. WRIGHT says its 'botanical name is *Rubus caesius*.' But of what avail are botanical names for fruits of autumn and for flowers of spring which are not only in bloom but are ripe in a dream on a midsummer night?—ED.

177. eyes] JOHNSON: I know not how Shakespeare, who commonly derived his knowledge of nature from his own observation, happened to place the glow-worm's light in his eyes, which is only in his tail.—HALLIWELL, with greater entomological accuracy, describes the light as 'emanating from the further segments of the abdomen,' and he might also have caught tripping even Dr Johnson himself for referring to the glow-worm as masculine.—M. MASON: Dr Johnson might have arraigned Shakespeare with equal propriety for sending his fairies to *light* their tapers at the fire of the glow-worm, which in *Hamlet* he terms *uneffectual*: 'The glow-worm . . . gins

To haue my loue to bed, and to ariſe: 178
And plucke the wings from painted Butterflies,
To fan the Moone-beames from his ſleeping eies. 180
Nod to him Elues, and doe him curteſies.

1. *Fai.* Haile mortall, haile.

2. *Fai.* Haile.

3. *Fai.* Haile.

Bot. I cry your worſhips mercy hartily; I beſeech 185
your worſhips name.

Cob. *Cobweb.*

Bot. I ſhall deſire you of more acquaintance, good Maſter *Cobweb*: if I cut my finger, I ſhall make bold with you. 190
Your name honeſt Gentleman?

Peaſ. *Peaſe bloſſome.*

Bot. I pray you commend mee to miſtreſſe *Squaſh*, 193

178. *haue*] *show* Gould.
179. *plucke*] *pluke* F_2.
182, 184. 1. Fai. ...*Haile.*] 1. F. *Hail mortal!* 2. *hail!* 3. *hail!* 4. *hail!* Cap. et seq. (subs.). Peas. *Hail mortal!* Cob. *Hail!* Moth. *Hail!* Mus. *Hail!* Dyce, White.
185. *worſhips*] *worship's* Rowe+, Steev.'85, Var.'21, Knt, Coll. Hal. Ktly.
186. *worſhips*] *worship's* Rowe et seq.
187, 189. Cobweb.] Cobwed. F_2.
188. *you of*] *of you* Rowe+.

to pale his uneffectual fire.' As we all know, and as Monk Mason himself probably knew, 'uneffectual' in *Hamlet* does not mean incapable of imparting fire, but of showing in the matin light. But Dr Johnson, of all men, could not complain at being 'knocked down with the butt of a pistol.' Indeed, he is sufficiently answered by the line in Herrick's *To Julia*, familiar as a household word: 'Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee.'—ED.—HAZLITT (*Characters*, &c., p. 130): This exhortation is remarkable for a certain cloying sweetness in the repetition of the rhymes.

188. you of] STEEVENS, MALONE, STAUNTON, and HALLIWELL give examples from old authors of this construction, which may be termed common. It is quite sufficient to refer to the note on line 42 of this scene, where ABBOTT, § 174, is cited, who gives additional examples, if even a single one be needed. The modern phrase in line 195: 'I shal desire of you more acquaintance,' is possibly a misprint.—ED.

189. if I, &c.] MALONE notes that there is a dialogue 'very similar to the present' in *The Mayde's Metamorphosis*, by Lilly. This play was published anonymously in 1600, possibly after Lilly's death, and so little resembles in style all of the other plays by that author that Fairholt does not even include it in Lilly's *Works*.—ED.

193. Squash] SKEAT (*Dict.* s. v. *to squash*): To crush, to squeeze flat. No doubt commonly regarded as an intensive form of *quash*; the prefix *s-* answering to Old French *es-* = Latin *ex-*. But it was originally quite an independent word, and even now there is a difference in sense; to *quash* never means to squeeze flat. . . . Derivative: *squash*, substantive, a soft unripe peascod [whereof Shakespeare himself gives the best definition in *Twel. N.* I, v, 165: 'Not yet old enough for a man, nor young

your mother, and to maſter *Peaſcod* your father. Good maſter *Peaſe-bloſſome*, I ſhal deſire of you more acquaintance to. Your name I beſeech you ſir?

Muſ. Muſtard-ſeede.

Peaſ. Peaſe-bloſſome.

Bot. Good maſter *Muſtard ſeede*, I know your patience well: that ſame cowardly gyant-like Oxe beefe hath deuoured many a gentleman of your houſe. I promiſe you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I deſire you more acquaintance, good Maſter *Muſtard-ſeede.*

Tita. Come waite vpon him, lead him to my bower.
The Moone me-thinks, lookes with a watrie eie,
And when ſhe weepes, weepe euerie little flower,

195. *of you more*] *you of more* Qq, Cap. et seq.
acquaintance to.] *acquaintance, to.* Q_1. *acquaintance too.* Ff et seq.
198. Peaſ. Peaſe-bloſſome.] Om. Qq Ff et seq.
199, 200. *your patience*] *your parentage* Han. Warb. *your puissance* Rann conj. *your passions* Farmer. *you passing* Mason.
202. *hath*] *have* Cap. conj.
203. *you more*] *your more* F_3F_4, Cam. White ii. *more of your* Rowe+. *you, more* Cap. Steev.'85, Mal.'90. *you of more* Dyce, White i, Coll. ii.
207. *weepe*] *weepes* Q_1, Han. Cap. et seq.

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enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod.' Our American vegetable, *squash*, is, according to the *Century Dict.*, an abbreviation of *squanter-squash*, a corruption of the American Indian *asqútasquash*. The authorities are Roger Williams, *Key to Lang. of America*, ed. 1643, and Josselyn, *N. E. Rarities*, 1672, Amer. Antiq. Soc. iv, 193.—ED.]

198. This is merely a compositor's negligent repetition of line 192, and was, of course, corrected in the next Folio.

199. patience] JOHNSON approved of HANMER'S change to *parentage;* FARMER fancied the true word was *passions*, i. e. sufferings.—CAPELL: 'Patience' is put for *impatience, hotness;* applicable, to a proverb, to the gentleman the speech addresses; and that this is its ironical sense, the ideas that follow after seem to confirm; insinuating that this hotness, being hereditary in the family, had been the cause that many of them had been 'devour'd' in their quarrels with 'ox-beef,' and of his crying for them.—REED: These words are spoken ironically. According to the opinion prevailing in our author's time, mustard was supposed to excite choler.—KNIGHT: The *patience* of the family of Mustard in being devoured by the ox-beef is one of those brief touches of wit, so common in Shakespeare, which take him far out of the range of ordinary writers.—HALLIWELL: Bottom is certainly speaking ironically, thinking perhaps of the old proverb—as hot as mustard. [Can there be a better proof of Mustard-seed's long suffering patience than that, being strong enough to force tears from Bottom's eyes, he permits himself to be devoured by a big cowardly Ox-beef?—ED.]

207. she weepes] WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 48): Alluding to the supposed origin of

Lamenting ſome enforced chaſtitie. 208
Tye vp my louers tongue, bring him ſilently. *Exit.*

[*Scene II.*]

Enter King of Pharies, ſolus.

Ob. I wonder if *Titania* be awak't;
Then what it was that next came in her eye,
Which ſhe muſt dote on, in extremitie.
Enter Pucke. 5
Here comes my meſſenger: how now mad ſpirit,
What night-rule now about this gaunted groue? 7

209. *louers*] *love's* Pope+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, White, Dyce, Sta. Cam. *louers tongue*] *lover's tongue and* Coll. ii (MS).
Exit.] Exeunt. Rowe.
Scene IV. Pope+. Scene II. Cap. et seq. Act IV, Sc. i. Fleay. Another Part of the Wood. Cap.
1. Enter...] Enter Oberon. Cap. et seq. folus.] and Robin Goodfellow. Qq, Om. Theob. Warb. et seq.
4. *extremitie*] *extreamitie* Q_1.
5. Om. Qq. After *meſſenger*, line 6, Dyce.
6. *ſpirit*] *sprite* Pope+.
7. *gaunted*] *haunted* QqFf.

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dew in the moon. *Macb.* III, v: 'Upon the corner of the moon There hangs a vaporous drop profound.' Fletcher, *Faithful Shepherdess*, iv, 4, Moxon, vol. i, p. 279: 'Showers of more price, more orient, and more round Than those that hang upon the moon's pale brow.'

209. louers] MALONE: Our poet has again used 'lover' as a monosyllable in *Twelfth N.* II, iv, 66: 'Sad true lover never find my grave.'—STEEVENS: In the passage quoted from *Twelfth N.* 'true lover' is evidently a mistake for *true love*, a phrase which occurs in the next scene, line 92. How is 'louer' to be pronounced as a monosyllable? [See WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 55), cited at II, ii, 81. There can be, I think, no doubt that *love* is the true word here. Is it insinuated that however deeply Titania may be enamoured with Bottom's fair large ears, and her eye enthralled to his shape, she can find no corresponding charm in his talk? There is a limit even to the powers of the magic love-juice; Bottom's tongue must be tied.—ED.]

4. must] Compelled by the love-juice.

6. spirit] See II, i, 32.

7. night-rule] STEEVENS: This should seem to mean here, what frolic of the night, what revelry is going forward?—NARES: Such conduct as generally *rules* in the night.—HALLIWELL quotes from the *Statutes of the Streets of London*, ap. Stowe, p. 666: 'No man shall, after the houre of nine at the night, keep any rule whereby any such sudden outcry be made in the still of the night,' &c. [Dyce's definition of 'rule' applies to this quotation from Stowe, and to other examples given by Halliwell, as well as to the present 'night-rule.' After quoting Nares's definition of 'rule,' viz. that it is apparently put for behaviour or conduct; with some allusion perhaps to the frolics called *mis-rule*,' DYCE adds: 'I believe it is equivalent to "revel, noisy sport"; Coles has "Rule (stir), *Tumultus*."—*Lat. and Eng. Dict.*' Whereby we come round

Puck. My Miſtris with a monſter is in loue,
Neere to her cloſe and conſecrated bower,
While ſhe was in her dull and ſleeping hower,
A crew of patches, rude Mcehanicals,
That worke for bread vpon *Athenian* ſtals,
Were met together to rehearſe a Play,
Intended for great *Theſeus* nuptiall day:
The ſhalloweſt thick-skin of that barren ſort,
Who *Piramus* preſented, in their ſport,
Forſooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,
When I did him at this aduantage take,
An Aſſes nole I fixed on his head.
Anon his *Thisbie* muſt be anſwered,
And forth my Mimmick comes: when they him ſpie,

8, 9. *loue,...bower,*] *loue,...bower.* Q_1. *love. ...bower*, Rowe et seq.
11. *Mcehanicals*] F_1.
14. Theſeus] *Theseus'* Rowe ii.
15. *thick-skin*] *thick-skull* Han.
16. *preſented, in their ſport,*] QqFf. *presented in their sport*, Coll. Hal. Wh. i, Sta. Dyce ii, iii. *presented, in their sport* Rowe et cet.
19. *nole*] *nowl* Johns. *nose* 'Bottom the Weaver.'
21. *Mimmick*] F_2F_3. *Minnick* Q_1. *Minnock* Q_2, Pope, Theob. Warb. Johns. Steev.'85. *Mimick* F_4 et cet. (subs.).

pretty nearly to Steevens's definition of 'night-rule' just given.—W. A. WRIGHT'S note here reads: 'Night-order, revelry, or diversion. "Rule" is used in the sense of conduct in *Twelfth N.* II, iii, 132: "Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour at anything more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule."' It is quite possible, I think, that here too Dyce's definition will apply, and that 'rule' means something more than simply *conduct*. Malvolio certainly intends to use vigorous language, and Sir Toby's conduct was extremely boisterous.—ED.]

11. patches] Elsewhere in Shakespeare, e. g. *Tempest*, III, ii, 66, and *Mer. of Ven.* II, v, 49 (of this ed.) this word has some reference, from the parti-coloured dress, to the domestic fool, but here it means, I think, merely *ill-dressed* fellows, or as Johnson has it, *tatterdemalions*.—ED.

15. thick-skin] STEEVENS [note, *Mer. Wives*, IV, v, 2]: Thus, Holland's *Pliny*, p. 346: 'Some measure not the finenesse of spirit and wit by the puritie of bloud, but suppose creatures are brutish, more or lesse, according as their skin is thicker or thinner.'—HALLIWELL: A common term of contempt for a stupid country bumpkin.

15. barren sort] STEEVENS: Dull company.

17. in] For other instances where 'in' is equivalent to *into*, see ABBOTT, § 159.

19. nole] W. A. WRIGHT: A grotesque word for head, like pate, noddle. In the Wicliffite versions of *Genesis*, xlix, 8, where the earlier has 'thin hondis in the skulles of thin enemyes'; the later has 'thin hondis schulen be in the nollis of thin enemyes'; the Latin being *cervicibus*. Probably 'nole,' like 'noddle,' was the back part of the head, and so included the neck. Cotgrave has 'Occipital, . . . belonging to the noddle, or hinder part of the head.'

21. Mimmick] JOHNSON, on the ground that *minnock* was 'apparently a word of

As Wilde-geese, that the creeping Fowler eye, 22
Or ruſſed-pated choughes, many in ſort

23. *ruſſed-pated*] *ruſſet pated* Q_1. *ruſſed pated* Q_2. *ruſſet-pated* F_4 et seq.

contempt,' believed that this misprint of Q_2 was right.—RITSON (p. 44) conjectured *mammock*, which 'signifies a *huge misshapen thing;* and is very properly applied by a Fairy to a clumsy over-grown clown.'—MALONE: 'Mimmick' is used as synonymous to *actor* in Decker's *Guls Hornebooke*, 1609: 'and draw what troope you can from the stage after you: the *Mimicks* are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow roome' [—p. 253, ed. Grosart].—W. A. WRIGHT cites a passage from Herrick's *The Wake*, ii, 62, where, again, the word has the same meaning, *actor*.

23. **russed-pated choughes**] Whether or not by the name 'chough,' one species of bird, and that the 'Cornish' or 'Red-legged Crow,' was always meant is doubtful. —HARTING (p. 118) says that we may infer the existence of 'various choughs' from a passage in O'Flaherty's *West or H'Iar Connaught*, 1684, p. 13:—'I omit other ordinary fowl and birds, as bernacles, wild geese, swans, cocks-of-the-wood, wood-cocks, *choughs*, rooks, *Cornish choughs, with red legs and bills*,' &c. 'Here,' adds Harting, 'the first-mentioned choughs were in all probability jackdaws.' Furthermore, 'the jackdaw, though having a grey head, would more appropriately bear the designation "russet-pated" than any of its congeners. We may presume, therefore, that this is the species to which Shakespeare intended to refer. The head of the chough, like the rest of its body, is perfectly black.'—The difficulty of reconciling the colour 'russet' with what is perfectly black is so grave that W. A. WRIGHT changed the text to 'russet-patted,' and remarked: 'I have not hesitated to adopt Mr. Bennett's suggestion (*Zoological Journal*, v, 496), communicated to me by Professor Newton, to substitute *russet-patted* or red-legged (Fr. *à pattes rousses*) for the old reading, which is untrue of the chough, for it has a russet-coloured bill and feet, but a perfectly black head.' Hereupon followed a discussion in *Notes & Queries* (5th Ser. xii, 444; 6th Ser. ix, 345, 396, 470; x, 499), whereof the substance is as follows: B. NICHOLSON maintains that change is needless; whatever be the colour of 'russet' it is properly applied to the chough; and in confirmation cites N. Breton, *Strange Newes*, &c. [p. 12, ed. Grosart], where the 'Russet-coate' of the chough is twice referred to.—F. A. MARSHALL adopts Harting's interpretation that the choughs here mentioned are jackdaws, but finds it difficult even then to account for the epithet *russet* in the sense of ruddy-brown as applied to them. As to the emendation proposed by Bennett and adopted by W. A. Wright, Marshall maintains that there is no such word as *patted*, and even if there were Shakespeare would not have applied to the claws what was distinctive of the whole leg; moreover, he would not have called that 'russet' which is scarlet or vermilion. Hereupon it became necessary to determine what the colour really is which 'russet' represents. From the seven or eight references supplied by Richardson's *Dict. s. v.* 'Russet,' Marshall thinks that his own suggestion is perfectly justified, that '*russet* might apply to the *grey* colour of the jackdaw's head,' but never to the bright red of the Cornish chough's feet and legs. Moreover he is confirmed, by a reconsideration of all the passages in Shakespeare where 'chough' occurs, in the belief that it 'never meant anything else but *jackdaw*.'—The discussion was closed by W. A. Wright, who, with a magnanimity unfortunately rare, acknowledged that Marshall was 'perfectly right in his suggestion

(Riſing and cawing at the guns report)
Seuer themſelues, and madly ſweepe the skye: 25
So at his ſight, away his fellowes flye,
And at our ſtampe, here ore and ore one fals; 27

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that *russet* in Shakespeare's time described the *grey*-coloured head of the jackdaw; I have, therefore, restored the old reading. I was induced to adopt Mr Bennett's conjecture, perhaps too hastily, from the feeling that the epithet "russet" as usually understood was inappropriate, and from the absence of any satisfactory evidence for another meaning. Lately, however, on looking into the question afresh, I have found proof that "russet," although rather loosely used, did bear the meaning of grey or ash-coloured, and I now give the evidence for the benefit of others. In the *Prompt. Parv.* (*cir.* 1440) we find, "*Russet*, Gresius," which is the French *gris*.—Junius's *Nomenclator*, trans. Higins (ed. Fleming, 1587), p. 178, gives:—"*Rauus* . . . *Faune, tané, rosset*, russet or tawnie colour."—*Rava* in Horace (*Od.* iii, 27, 3) is an epithet of the she-wolf.—"*Grigietto*, a fine graie or sheepes *russet*."—Florio, *A Worlde of Wordes*, 1598. "*Gris.* m. *ise.* f. Gray, *light-russet*, grizle, ash-coloured, hoarie, whitish."—Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.* 1611.—"Also, whosoever have about him hanging to anie part of his bodie the heart of a toad, enfolded within a peece of cloth of a *white russet* colour (*in panno leucophæo*), hee shall be delivered from the quartane ague."—Holland's *Pliny*, 1601, xxxii, 10. "Contrariwise, that which is either purple or ash-coloured and *russet* to see too, &c. (*Purpurea aut leucophæa*)."—*Ibid.*, xxiv, 12. In the last passage *ash-coloured* and *russet* are evidently synonymous, and equivalent to *leucophæa*. But to show that *russet* was rather loosely applied it is sufficient to quote another instance from the same volume. In Holland's *Pliny*, xi, 37 (vol. i, p. 335), the following is the translation of "aliis nigri, aliis ravi, aliis glauci coloris orbibus cirumdatis":—"This ball and point of the sight is compassed also round about with other circles of sundry colours, black, blewish, tawnie, *russet*, and red;" the last three epithets being to all appearance alternative equivalents of *ravi*. *Russet*, so far as one can judge, described a sad colour, and was applied to various shades both of grey and brown. That *chough* and *jackdaw* were practically synonymous may be inferred from Holland also. In his translation of *Pliny*, x, 29 (vol. i, p. 285) we find:—"And yet in the neighbor quarters of the Insubrians neere adjoining, we shall have infinite and innumerable flockes and flights of *choughes and jack dawes* (*gracculorum monedularumque*)." Here *gracculus* is the chough, and *monedula* the jackdaw; but in xvii, 14 (vol. i, p. 516), where the Latin has only *monedula*, the translator renders, "It is said moreover, that the *Chough* or *Daw* hath given occasion hereof by laying up for store seeds and other fruits in crevises and holes of trees, which afterwards sprouted and grew." If *monedula*, therefore, can be rendered in one passage by "jackdaw" and in another by "chough or daw," it is not too much to assume that in the mind of the translator, who was a physician at Coventry in Shakespeare's own county, the chough and the jackdaw were the same bird.' [See 'gray light,' line 443, *post*.]

23. **sort**] Company; see line 15.

27. **stampe**] THEOBALD (*Nichols*, 233): Perhaps 'at our *stump* here,'—pointing to the stump of some tree, over which the frighted rustics fell.—JOHNSON: Fairies are never represented stamping, or of a size that should give force to a stamp, nor

He murther cries, and helpe from *Athens* cals.
Their ſenſe thus weake, loſt with their feares thus ſtrong,
Made ſenſeleſſe things begin to do them wrong.
For briars and thornes at their apparell ſnatch,
Some ſleeues, ſome hats, from yeelders all things catch,
I led them on in this diſtracted feare,
And left ſweete *Piramus* tranſlated there:
When in that moment(ſo it came to paſſe)
Tytania waked, and ſtraightway lou'd an Aſſe.
Ob. This fals out better then I could deuiſe:

32. *yeelders*] *yielders* F_3F_4.

could they have distinguished the stamps of Puck from those of their own companions. I read, 'at *a stump*.' So Drayton: 'A pain he in his head-piece feels, Against a *stubbed tree* he reels, And up went poor Hobgoblin's heels, &c. . . . A *stump* doth *trip him* in his pace, Down fell poor Hob upon his face,' &c.—[*Nymphidia*, p. 166, ed. 1748. The CAMBRIDGE EDITORS record this conj. as adopted in Johnson's text, and also as anticipated by Theobald. They were possibly misled by the 'I read' in Johnson's note, which means merely that he conjectures; the original 'stamp' is retained in Johnson's text; and they overlooked that Theobald's conj. is '*our* stump.' —ED.]—RITSON: Honest Reginald Scott says: 'Robin Goodfellow . . . would chafe exceedingly if the maid or good wife of the house . . . laid anie clothes for him beesides his messe of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith, What have we here? Hemton, hamten, here will I never more tread nor stampen.'—*Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584, p. 85.—STEEVENS: The *stamp* of a fairy might be efficacious though not loud; neither is it necessary to suppose, when supernatural beings are spoken of, that the size of the agent determines the force of the action. See IV, i, 97: 'Come, my queen, take hand with me, And *rock* the ground,' &c.—ALLEN (MS): It cannot be 'our'; there was no *we* in the case; no fairy but Puck alone; and it was nobody's stamp that made the boors scatter; it was merely the sight of Bottom's new head. *Perhaps:* 'at *one* stamp,'— as we might say: at one bound, at one rush; for they started so instantly, all together, that all their feet struck the ground, on starting to run, with one stamp, one noise (Anticipative of *stampede!*). [If change be needed, Allen's conj. is worthy of adoption. That Shakespeare has nowhere else thus used 'stamp' amounts to but little. Puck's sudden change to 'our,' when he was the sole agent, is somewhat unaccountable. W. A. WRIGHT interprets the phrase 'at hearing the footsteps of the fairies,' but we have no authority for the presence of any other fairy than Puck, who says, '*I* did him at this advantage take,' '*I* fixed an asses nole,' and '*I* led them on,' &c. The misprint of 'our' for *one* is of the simplest. Since the foregoing note was written, the Second Edition of the *Cambridge Edition* has appeared; in it 'our stamp' is duly credited as Theobald's conj., but 'a stamp,' as Johnson's reading, is still retained.—ED.]

28. **He**] ABBOTT, § 217: Used like *hic* (in the antithesis between *hic . . . ille*).

30. **senselesse**] DYCE (*Rem.* 47) asks why Collier has a comma after this word. It was probably an oversight; it is corrected in Collier's third edition. —ED

But haſt thou yet lacht the *Athenians* eyes, 38

38. *lacht*] *latcht* $Q_1F_3F_4$. *lech'd* Han. *washed* Orger. Cap. *streak'd* or *bath'd* D. Wilson. 38. Athenians] *Athenian* F_4, Rowe i.

38. lacht] HANMER: Or letch'd, lick'd over, *lecher*, Fr. to lick.—STEEVENS: In the North it signifies to *infect*.—STAUNTON, referring to Hanmer's note, says that he has found no instance of the word thus used.—DYCE, however, gives no other meaning than this of Hanmer, and cites Richardson's *Dict.* as adopting it.—HALLIWELL gives the meaning *to catch*. 'Hence, metaphorically,' he continues, 'to infect. "*Latching*, catching, infecting," Ray's *English Words*, ed. 1674, p. 29. The word occurs in the first sense in *Macbeth* [IV, iii, 196]. I believe the usual interpretation, *licked over*, is quite inadmissible; but it is to be observed that the direction was to *anoint* the eyes. The love-juice literally caught the Athenian's eyes.'—W. A. WRIGHT: In the other passages where 'latch' is used by Shakespeare it has the sense of *catch*, from A.-S. *læccan*, or *gelæccan*. See *Macbeth*, and *Sonn.* 113, 6, of the eye: 'For it no form delivers to the heart Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch.' Compare also Holland's *Pliny*, viii, 24, of the Ichneumon: 'In fight he sets up his taile, & whips about, turning his taile to the enemie, & therein latcheth and receiveth all the strokes of the Aspis.' In the present passage 'latch'd' must signify caught and held fast as by a charm or spell, like the disciples going to Emmaus (*Luke* xxiv, 16): 'their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.' There appears to be no evidence for Hanmer's interpretation. On the other hand, a 'latch-pan' in Suffolk and Norfolk is a dripping-pan, which catches the dripping from the meat; and Bailey gives 'latching' in the sense of catching, infectious; as it is still used in the North of England.—DANIEL (p. 32): Perhaps the right word should be *hatch'd*. In Beaumont and Fletcher it is a word of frequent occurrence, meaning generally to cover thinly, as in gilding, lackering, varnishing, or staining. [Here follow seven or eight examples of the use of *hatch*, all of which corroborate Gifford's definition: 'Literally, to hatch is to inlay; metaphorically, it is to adorn, to beautify, with silver, gold, &c.'—Note on 'thy chin is hatched with silver,' Shirley, *Love in a Maze*, II, ii, cited by Dyce. Daniel's suggestion is upheld by Deighton.]—W. W. SKEAT (*Academy*, 11 May, 1889): The word here used has nothing to do with 'latch,' to catch. Mr W. A. Wright cites *latch-pan*, so called because it '*catches* the dripping'; and the Prov. English *latching*, catching. Halliwell remarks on *latch-pan* that 'every cook in Suffolk could settle the dispute,' and adds, 'the Athenian's eyes were Puck's latch-pans.' The fact is that the whole trouble has arisen from this etymology of 'latch-pan.' The explanation depends upon the fact that there are two distinct verbs, both spelt 'latch,' which are wholly unrelated to each other. Shakespeare's 'latch' is related to 'latch-pan' precisely because a *latch-pan* is totally unconnected with 'latch,' to catch. It correctly means *dripping-pan*, because 'latch' means to drip, or to cause to drop or to dribble. To '*latch* with love-juice' is to drop love-juice upon, to distil upon, to dribble on, or simply to moisten. If we will give up the Anglo-Saxon *gelæccan*, and consider the common Eng. verb 'to leak,' we shall soon come to a satisfactory result. To 'leak' means to admit drops of water; and 'latch' is practically the causal form. The use of the latter occurs in Prov. Eng. *latch on*, 'to put water on the mash when the first wort is run off,' says Halliwell. It means merely to dribble on, to pour on slowly. The Swedish has the very phrase. Widegren's *Swedish Dict.* (1788) gives us '*Laka*, to distil, to fall by drops.' This

With the loue iuyce, as I did bid thee doe?
Rob. I tooke him ſleeping (that is finiſht to)
And the *Athenian* woman by his ſide,
That when he wak't, of force ſhe muſt be eyde.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia.

Ob. Stand cloſe, this is the ſame *Athenian.*
Rob. This is the woman, but not this the man.
Dem. O why rebuke you him that loues you ſo?
Lay breath ſo bitter on your bitter foe.
Her. Now I but chide, but I ſhould vſe thee worſe.
For thou (I feare) haſt giuen me cauſe to curſe,
If thou haſt ſlaine *Lyſander* in his ſleepe,
Being ore ſhooes in bloud, plunge in the deepe, and kill
me too:

40, 45. Rob.] Puck. Rowe et seq.
40. *ſleeping (that...to)*] *sleeping; that ...too;* Rowe+.
to] *too* Ff.
42. *wak't*] *wakes* Pope+.
43. Scene V. Pope+.
44, 45. Aside. Cap. They stand apart. Coll. ii (MS).
51. *the deepe*] *knee-deep* Coleridge (ap. Walker), Maginn, Phelps, Dyce ii, iii, Ktly, Huds.
51, 52. *and kill me too*] Sep. line, Rowe ii et seq.
52. *too*] *to* Qq.

laka gives us the original *a;* the mutated *a* occurs in Swed. läka, 'to leak.' Icelandic has the strong verb *leka*, 'to drip, to dribble, also to leak.' Koolman's *E. Friesic Dict.* also helps us. He gives: *lek*, 'a drop, a dripping from a roof'; *lek bĕr*, 'drop-beer,' *i. e.* beer caught by standing a vessel under a leaky cock of a cask; *lek-fat*, 'a drop-vessel,' *i. e.* a vessel in which drops are collected. The connexion of the latter with 'a *latch-pan*' is obvious. The nearest-related Anglo-Saxon word is *leccan*, 'to moisten, wet, irrigate.' This would have given a verb to *letch*, with the sense 'to moisten.' The Prov. Eng. *latch* seems to be due to some confusion between this form and the base *lak*, which appears in the Swedish *laka*, Danish *lage*, and in the past tense of the Icel. strong verb; or else, as is common in English, 'latch,' to catch, and the less-known 'letch,' to moisten, were fused under one (viz. the commoner) form. Whatever the true history of the form of the word may be, I think we need have no doubt now as to its true sense.

46, 48. you . . . thee] Note that Demetrius uses the respectful 'you,' while Hermia replies with the contemptuous 'thou.'—ED.

51. bloud] STEEVENS: So in *Macb.* III, iv, 136: 'I am in blood Stepp'd in so far,' &c.

51. the deepe] WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 49): Read, with Coleridge, '*knee*-deep.' Compare Heywood, *Woman Killed with Kindness*, Dodsley, vii, 268: 'Come, come, let's in; Once over shoes, we are straight o'er head in sin.' *Qu.* Is it a proverbial phrase?—HALLIWELL quotes a note by Phelps in which this emendation 'knee-deep' is given, but no reference to Coleridge as the author. If Coleridge be the author, he

The Sunne was not ſo true vnto the day,
As he to me. Would he haue ſtollen away,
From ſleeping *Hermia*? Ile beleeue as ſoone
This whole earth may be bord, and that the Moone
May through the Center creepe, and ſo diſpleaſe
Her brothers noonetide, with th'*Antipodes*.
It cannot be but thou haſt murdred him,
So ſhould a mutrherer looke, ſo dead, ſo grim.
Dem. So ſhould the murderer looke, and ſo ſhould I,
Pierſt through the heart with your ſtearne cruelty:
Yet you the murderer looks as bright as cleare,
As yonder *Venus* in her glimmering ſpheare.

54. *away,*] *away* Rowe et seq.
55. *From*] *Frow* Q_1.
57. *diſpleaſe*] *disease* Han. *displace* D. Wilson. *disseise* Annandale ap. Marshall.
58. *with th'*] *i' th'* Warb. *with the* Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, Dyce, Cam. Wh. ii.
60. *mutrherer*] F_1. *murderer* Q_2. *dead*] *dread* Pope+.
61. *murderer*] F_2F_3. *murtherer* F_4, Rowe. *murthered* Q_1. *murdered* Q_2. *murther'd* or *murder'd* Pope et cet.
63. *looks*] *looke* Qq, Rowe et seq.

must antedate Phelps; I am unable, however, to say where in Coleridge's notes the emendation is to be found. DYCE, who adopts it, states no more than the fact that it is Coleridge's, and that Walker approved of it. The instances are extremely rare where Dyce does not cite volume and page, and his omission to cite them in regard to Coleridge leads me to think that Walker alone was his authority. I strongly suspect that it was not Coleridge, after all, who proposed the amendment, but Maginn. In a foot-note (*Shakespeare Papers*, p. 138, ed. 1860) MAGINN says: 'Should we not read "*knee* deep"? As you are already over your shoes, wade on until the bloody tide reaches your knees. In Shakespeare's time *knee* was generally spelt *kne;* and between *the* and *kne* there is not much difference in writing.' In Phelps's note, quoted by Halliwell, this last sentence of Maginn is repeated word for word. The objection to this emendation, not absolutely fatal, but still serious, is one that Maginn evidently felt when he substituted *wade* for 'plunge'; in water knee-deep we can certainly wade, but it can hardly be said that we can *plunge* into it.—ED.

51, 52. **and kill me too**] Of course ROWE was right in making a separate line of these words. Probably some dramatic action, such as offering her breast to him to strike, completed the line.—SCHMIDT, however, conjectures (*Programm*, &c., p. 5) that some words have dropped out, because 'even in a tragedy, where there is talk of real killing, Shakespeare would not have laid so strong an emphasis on such a phrase as "And kill me too" as to let it interpose between two rhyming couplets.' The cheap plea of an omission should be our very last resort.—ED.

56. **whole**] W. A. WRIGHT: Solid. Compare *Macb.* III, iv, 22: 'Whole as the marble.'

60. **dead**] STEEVENS: Compare *2 Henry IV:* I, i, 71: 'Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless, So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone.'—CAPELL: Pope's change to *dread* is implied in 'grim'; by 'dead' is meant *pale.*

61, 63. **murderer . . . looks**] Corrected in the Qq.

Her. What's this to my *Lyſander*? where is he? 65
Ah good *Demetrius*, wilt thou giue him me?
Dem. I'de rather giue his carkaſſe to my hounds.
Her. Out dog, out cur, thou driu'ſt me paſt the bounds
Of maidens patience. Haſt thou ſlaine him then?
Henceforth be neuer numbred among men. 70
Oh, once tell true, euen for my ſake,
Durſt thou a lookt vpon him, being awake?
And haſt thou kill'd him ſleeping? O braue tutch:
Could not a worme, an Adder do ſo much?
An Adder did it: for with doubler tongue 75
Then thine(thou ſerpent) neuer Adder ſtung.
Dem. You ſpend your paſſion on a miſpri'sd mood,
I am not guiltie of *Lyſanders* blood:
Nor is he dead for ought that I can tell.
Her. I pray thee tell me then that he is well. 80

67. *I'de*] Ff. *Ide* Q_2. *I'd* Rowe, Hal. Wh. i, Sta. *I'ad* Pope+. *I had* Q_1 et cet.
68. *bounds*] *bonds* Q_2.
71. *tell true*] *tell true, and* Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. *tell true: tell true* Q_1, Johns. et seq. (subs.).
72. *a*] *haue* Qq, Rowe ii et seq.
73. *tutch*] *touch* Rowe et seq.
75. *An*] *And* F_2.
77. *on a...mood*] *in a...flood* Coll. MS.
79. *ought*] *aught* Theob. ii, Warb. Johns. Mal. Steev. Knt, Coll. Dyce et seq.

64. **glimmering**] W. A. WRIGHT: Faintly shining; this epithet seems in contradiction to 'bright' and 'clear' of the previous line.

69. **him then?**] Does not the wildness of Hermia's grief suggest that we should thus punctuate: 'Hast thou slain him? Then Henceforth be never,' &. ?—ED.

71. **tell true**] We must again look to the Quartos for the rhythmical completion of this line.

72. **thou a lookt**] I am not sure that this 'a,' the mere suggestion of *have*, does not permit an increased emphasis of scorn to be thrown on 'looked.' I am quite sure, however, that Capell did not improve the vigour of the line when he took away the interrogation mark at the end and substituted a comma, wherein he has been generally followed.—ED.

73. **tutch**] JOHNSON: The same with our *exploit*, or rather *stroke*. A brave touch, a noble stroke, *un grand coup*. '*Mason* was verie merie, . . . pleasantlie playing, both, with the shrewde touches of many courste boyes, and with the small discretion of many leude Scholemasters.'—Ascham [*The Scholemaster*, p. 18, ed. Arber].

77. **mispris'd mood**] JOHNSON: That is, mistaken; so below [line 93], 'misprision' is *mistake*.—MALONE: 'Mood' is anger, or perhaps rather, in this place, *capricious fancy*.—STEEVENS: I rather conceive that '*on* a mispris'd *mood*' is put for *in* a mistaken *manner*.' See ABBOTT, § 180, for instances of the use of 'on' for *in*. —ALLEN (MS): It might be 'on a mispris'd *word*,'—you have mistaken the meaning of my word 'murder'd' or 'carcase.'

Dem. And if I could, what ſhould I get therefore? 81
Her. A priuiledge, neuer to ſee me more;
And from thy hated preſence part I: ſee me no more.
Whether he be dead or no. *Exit.*
Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vaine, 85
Here therefore for a while I will remaine.
So ſorrowes heauineſſe doth heauier grow:
For debt that bankrout ſlip doth ſorrow owe,
Which now in ſome ſlight meaſure it will pay,
If for his tender here I make ſome ſtay. *Lie downe.* 90

81. *And*] QqFf, Rowe+. *And*, Coll. Wh. i. *An* Cap. et cet.
82. *ſee me*] *see him* Steev.'85 (misprint?).
83. *part I:*] *part I so:* Pope et seq.
83, 84. *ſee...no.*] Sep. line, Pope et seq.
84. *he be*] *he's* Pope+.
88. *bankrout ſlip*] *bankrout ſlippe* Q_2. *bankrupt sleep* Rowe et seq.
90. Lie downe.] Ly doune. Q_1. Lies down. Rowe.
[Scene VI. Pope, Han.

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81. **And if**] The rule is so uniform in the Ff and Qq that 'and if' is 'an if,' that any exception must find unusual support in the meaning or force of the phrase. 'An if' is not a mere reduplication of 'if'; it adds much to the uncertainty of the doubt. Wherefore, I think, before we can decide that 'and if' is equivalent to *an if* in any given example, we must be sure that this added doubt is intended. Is this the case here? The emphatic thought in this line is '*what* should I get therefor?' and the emphatic word is 'what.' There is no such emphasis on the doubt that the 'if' need be duplicated. The sense would be quite as good, perhaps even better, if a comma were placed after 'And,' a shade of contempt might be then detected: 'And, if I could, *what* should,' &c. Wherefore, if an exception to the rule is to be made, I should make it here. It is in such cases as this that we feel the need of the Greek Moods and Particles.—ED.

83. **part I:**] Every editor, I believe, since Pope has adopted the latter's change for rhyme's sake, 'part I *so*:' That *so* is the word which the compositor has omitted I have no doubt, but whether or not we should adopt Pope's punctuation I have strong doubts. Hermia is at the height of her passion, and I cannot imagine her as using a phrase like 'part I so!' where *so* has really not only little meaning, but actually detracts from the force of her vigorous determination to part. I prefer a full stop, and read, 'from thy hated presence part I. So, See me no more,' &c.—ED.

84. **Whether**] For instances of the very common contraction in scanning into *Whe'er*, see Walker, *Vers.* 103; Abbott, § 466; it is certainly better to make this contraction than to change 'he be' into *he's*, with Pope.—ED.

87. **So**] DEIGHTON: 'So' seems out of place here, it not being correlative to anything; possibly it is a mistake for *since*, the *so* of 'sorrow' being caught by the transcriber's eye.

88–90. **debt . . . bankrout . . . tender**] MARSHALL thinks that the 'prosaic and legal character' of these words 'smells' of an attorney's office. The fondness of Shakespeare for similes drawn from bankruptcy, even in the most impassioned pas-

Ob. What haſt thou done? Thou haſt miſtaken quite
And laid the louc iuyce on ſome true loues ſight:
Of thy miſpriſion, muſt perforce enſue
Some true loue turn'd, and not a falſe turn'd true.
Rob. Then fate ore-rules, that one man holding troth,
A million faile, confounding oath on oath.
Ob. About the wood, goe ſwifter then the winde,
And *Helena* of *Athens* looke thou finde.
All fancy ſicke ſhe is, and pale of cheere,
With ſighes of loue, that coſts the freſh bloud deare.

91. [Coming forward with Puck. Coll. ii.
92. *the*] *thy* F_4, Rowe+, Steev.'73.
louc] F_1 (ap. Editor's copy).
true loues] *true-love's* Cap. et seq.
94. *turn'd, and*] *turn'd false* Han.
true loue] *true-love* Var.'21 et seq.
95. Rob.] Puck. Rowe et seq.
95. *that*] *for* Han.
96. *A million*] *And million* Del. (misprint?).
97. Ob.] Rob. F_2.
98. *looke*] *see* Rowe+.
100. *coſts*] *cost* Theob. ii+, Steev. Mal. Knt, Coll. Sing. Hal. Dyce, Sta.

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sages, may be learned from Mrs Cowden-Clarke's, and Mrs Furness's *Concordances*. —ED.

88. slip] COLLIER calls attention to a similar spelling, which sometimes occurs, of 'ship' for *sheep*.

90. Lie downe] Another stage-direction in the imperative, betraying the stage-house copy.—ED.

93. Of] For instances where 'of,' meaning *from*, passes naturally into the meaning *resulting from, as a consequence of*, see ABBOTT, § 168.

93. mispriſion] Mistake. See 'mispris'd,' line 77.

95, 96. Then . . . oath] DEIGHTON: Puck's excuse for his carelessness does not seem to be very logical. Possibly the meaning is: Then, if that happens, the fault is fate's, who so often is too strong for men's intentions that, for one man who keeps faith, a million, whatever their intentions, give way and break oath after oath, *i. e.* any number of oaths.—GERVINUS (p. 196, trans.): The poet further depicts his fairies as beings of no high intellectual development. Whoever attentively reads their parts will find that nowhere is reflection imparted to them. Only in one exception does Puck make a sententious remark upon the infidelity of man, and whoever has penetrated into the nature of these beings will immediately feel that it is out of harmony. [Or, in other words, it does not happen to fadge with the scheme of fairydom which the learned German has evolved; and christened Shakespeare's.—ED.]

95. that] For instances where 'that' means *in that*, see ABBOTT, § 284.

96. confounding] SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) will supply many examples where 'confound' means *to ruin, to destroy*. Here the meaning is 'breaking oath upon oath.'

99. fancy] That is, love. See I, i, 165.

99. cheere] SKEAT (*Dict.*): Middle English *chere*, commonly meaning the face; hence mien, look, demeanour. Old French *chere, chiere*, the face, look.

100. costs] Many excellent modern editors follow Theobald in needlessly

By ſome illuſion ſee thou bring her heere,
Ile charme his eyes againſt ſhe doth appeare.
Robin. I go, I go, looke how I goe,
Swifter then arrow from the *Tartars* bowe. *Exit.*
Ob. Flower of this purple die,
Hit with *Cupids* archery,
Sinke in apple of his eye,
When his loue he doth eſpie,
Let her ſhine as glorioufly
As the *Venus* of the sky.
When thou wak'ſt if ſhe be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Captaine of our Fairy band,
Helena is heere at hand,
And the youth, miſtooke by me,

102. *doth*] *doe* Qq, Cap. Steev. Mal. Coll. Sing. Dyce, Cam. Wh. ii.
103. Robin.] Rob. Ff. Puck. Rowe et seq.
looke] *look*, *master*, Han.
104. Exit.] Om. Q_1.
106. [Squeezes the flower on Demetrius's eyelids. Dyce.
112. *of her*] *of her*, Q_1.

changing 'costs' into 'cost.' W. A. WRIGHT explains the singular here as by attraction, but ABBOTT, § 247, gives so many examples of *that* with a plural antecedent followed by a verb in the singular, where attraction cannot apply, that it is perhaps better to explain examples like the present as the result of an idiom, and that the principle of attraction applies when the clause is not dependent.—ED.

100. dear] STEEVENS: So in *2 Hen. VI:* III, ii, 61: 'Might liquid tears or heart-offending groans, Or blood-consuming sighs recall his life, I would be blind with weeping, sick with groans, Look pale as primrose with blood-drinking sighs.' Again, *3 Hen. VI:* IV, iv, 22: 'Ay, ay, for this I draw in many a tear And stop the rising of blood-sucking sighs.' All alluding to the ancient supposition that every sigh was indulged at the expense of a drop of blood. [See also to the same effect: 'Dry sorrow drinks our blood.'—*Rom. & Jul.* III, v, 59; 'Like a spendthrift sigh That hurts by easing.'—*Ham.* IV, vii, 123; 'let Benedick, like cover'd fire, Consume away in sighs.'—*Much Ado*, III, i, 78.]—STAUNTON: The notion that sighing tends to impair the animal powers is still prevalent.

104. Tartars] DOUCE: So in Golding's *Ovid*, Bk 10: 'And though that she Did fly as swift as Arrow from a Turkye bowe.'—W. A. WRIGHT: Compare *Rom. & Jul.* I, iv, 5: 'Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath.' Also Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, Bk II, xiv, 11: 'Yet certain it is that words, as a Tartar's bow, do shoot back upon the understanding of the wisest.'

106. See II, i, 171.

107. in apple] For similar omissions of the article, see ABBOTT, § 89.

Pleading for a Louers fee.
Shall we their fond Pageant ſee?
Lord, what fooles theſe mortals be!
Ob. Stand aſide: the noyſe they make,
Will cauſe *Demetrius* to awake.
Puck. Then will two at once wooe one,
That muſt needs be ſport alone:
And thoſe things doe beſt pleaſe me,
That befall prepoſterouſly.

Enter Lyſander and Helena.

Lyſ. Why ſhould you think ỹ I ſhould wooe in ſcorn?

125. *prepoſterouſly*] *prepoſt'rouſly* Q_2, Theob.+, Cap. [They stand apart. Coll. ii. 125. [Scene VII. Pope, Han. Scene VI. Warb. Johns.

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117. **Louers fee**] HALLIWELL: Three kisses were properly a lover's fee. 'How many, saies Batt; why, three, saies Matt, for that's a mayden's fee,' MS Ballad, circa 1650. [No great weight can be attached, I think, to post-Shakespearian quotations, especially when there is but a single one. Moreover, I doubt if 'lover's fee' here means an *honorarium*, but its meaning is rather, *estate, right by virtue of his title as lover*.—ED.]

123. **sport alone**] COLLIER: A coarse character, under the name of Robin Goodfellow, is introduced into the play of *Wily Beguiled*, the first edition of which is dated 1606, but which must have been acted perhaps ten years earlier; there one of Robin Goodfellow's frequent exclamations is, 'Why this will be sport alone,' meaning such excellent sport that nothing can match it.—HALLIWELL: A vernacular phrase signifying excellent sport. 'This islande were a place alone for one that were vexed with a shrewd wyfe.'—Holinshed, 1577. 'Now, by my sheepe-hooke, here's a tale alone.'—Drayton's *Shepherd's Garland*, 1593. [Collier's interpretation is the better. 'Sport alone' means sport all by itself, that is, unparalleled. ABBOTT, § 18, gives as its equivalent *above all things*, and cites in addition to the present passage, 'I am alone the villain of the earth.'—*Ant. & Cleop.* IV, vi, 30; 'So full of shapes is fancy That it alone is high fantastical.'—*Twelfth Night*, I, i, 15.—ED.]

125. **preposterously**] STAUNTON [Note on *Tam. of the Shr.* III, i, 9]: Shakespeare uses 'preposterous' closer to its primitive and literal sense of *inverted order*, ὕστερον πρότερον, than is customary now. With us, it implies *monstrous, absurd, ridiculous*, and the like; with him it meant *misplaced, out of the natural* or *reasonable course*.

127. **should wooe**] ABBOTT, § 328, thinks that there is no other reason for the use of 'should' here than that it denotes, like *sollen* in German, a statement not made by the speaker. It may be so, and yet the idea of *ought to*, equally with *sollen*, may be imputed to it here. 'Why should you think that I *ought to* woo in scorn?' As was said in *The Tempest* on the phrase 'where should he learn our language?' the use of 'should' in Shakespeare is of the subtlest.—ED.

Scorne and derifion neuer comes in teares :
Looke when I vow I weepe ; and vowes ſo borne,
In their natiuity all truth appeares.
How can theſe things in me, ſeeme ſcorne to you?
Bearing the badge of faith to proue them true.
Hel. You doe aduance your cunning more & more,
When truth kils truth, O diueliſh holy fray!
Theſe vowes are *Hermias.* Will you giue her ore?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh.
Your vowes to her, and me, (put in two ſcales)
Will euen weigh, and both as light as tales.
Lyſ. I had no iudgement, when to her I ſwore.
Hel. Nor none in my minde, now you giue her ore.
Lyſ. *Demetrius* loues her, and he loues not you. *Awa.*

128. *comes*] *come* Qq, Rowe et seq.
129. *borne*] *born* F_3F_4.
134. *truth kils truth*] *trueth killes truth* Q_1.
134. *diueliſh holy*] *devilish-holy* Cap. et seq.
141. Awa.] Om. Qq. Awaking. Rowe. Starting up. Coll.

128. **comes**] Is there any necessity to change this to the plural, with the Qq? Cannot 'scorn-and-derision' be conceived of as one mingled emotion of the mind? —ED.

129, 130. **vowes so borne . . . appears**] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 56) thinks that there is here 'an instinctive striving after a natural arrangement of words inconsistent with modern English grammar'; and ABBOTT, §§ 417, 376, classes 'vows so born' either as a 'noun absolute' or as a 'participle used with a Nominative Absolute.' I cannot but think that both critics, misled by the singular 'appears,' have mistaken the construction. 'Appears' should be, according to modern grammar, in the plural; its subject is 'vows,' it is singular merely by attraction; 'all truth' is the predicate, not the subject. My paraphrase, therefore, is: 'vows, thus born, appear, from their very nativity, to be all pure truth.' The next lines seem to confirm it. It can hardly be supposed that Lysander means to assert that 'all truth,' universal truth, is to be found in such vows.—ED.

132. **badge**] STEEVENS: This is an allusion to the 'badges' (*i. e.* family crests) anciently worn on the sleeves of servants and retainers. So in *Temp.* V. i, 267: 'Mark but the badges of these men, my lords, Then say if they be true.'

134. **When . . . fray**] W. A. WRIGHT: If Lysander's present protestations are true, they destroy the truth of his former vows to Hermia, and the contest between these two truths, which in themselves are holy, must in the issue be devilish and end in the destruction of both.

138. **tales**] W. A. WRIGHT: Or idle words. There is the same contrast between truths and tales in *Ant. & Cleop.* II, ii, 136: 'Truths would be tales, Where now half tales be truths.' [May not 'tales' here mean *stories of the imagination, pure fiction?*—ED.]

141. WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 49): There is *perhaps* a line lost after this line.—SCHMIDT

Dem. O *Helen*, goddeſſe, nimph, perfect, diuine, 142
To what my, loue, ſhall I compare thine eyne!
Chriſtall is muddy, O how ripe in ſhow,
Thy lips, thoſe kiſſing cherries, tempting grow! 145
That pure congealed white, high *Taurus* ſnow,
Fan'd with the Eaſterne winde, turnes to a crow;
When thou holdſt vp thy hand. O let me kiſſe
This Princeſſe of pure white, this ſeale of bliſſe.
Hell. O ſpight! O hell! I ſee you are all bent 150
To ſet againſt me, for your merriment:
If you were ciuill, and knew curteſie,
You would not doe me thus much iniury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you doe, 154

142. *perfect, diuine*] *perfect diuine* Q_r.
143. *To what my,*] *To what? my* F_3F_4.
146. *congealed*] *conicaled* Q_1.
149. *Princeſſe*] *pureness* Han. Warb. *impress* Coll. ii (MS), Sta. *purest* Lettsom (ap. Dyce). *Empress* Marshall conj.
149. *Princeſſe of pure*] *quintessence of* Bailey (withdrawn).
white] *whites* Bailey.
150. *are all*] *all are* Qq, Pope et seq.

(*Programm*, &c., p. 5) makes the same conjecture, which is, I think, needless. The emphasis with which Lysander pronounces the name Demetrius may have awakened the bearer of it, and in the new turn given to the dramatic action the loss of a rhyming line was not felt.—ED.

141. **Awa.**] Evidently the abbreviation of *Awake;* another mandatory stage-direction of a play-house copy.—ED.

145. **kissing cherries**] KNIGHT: These 'kissing cherries' gave Herrick a stock in trade for half a dozen poems. We would quote the 'Cherry Ripe,' had it not passed into that extreme popularity which almost renders a beautiful thing vulgar. [Knight here quotes 'The Weeping Cherry,' which the inquisitive reader may find in Herrick's *Hesperides*, &c., vol. i, p. 10, ed. Singer.]

146. **Taurus**] JOHNSON: The name of a range of mountains in Asia.

149 **Princesse**] HEATH (p. 53): I can see no objection to this reading. 'Tis not an unusual expression to call the most excellent and perfect in any kind the prince of the kind. [This note Capell properly quotes with approval.]—COLLIER (ed. i): It may be doubted from the context whether *impress* were not Shakespeare's word.—IB. (ed. ii): This emendation [*impress*] of the MS can hardly be wrong; the old reading, 'princess,' cannot be right. *Impress* and 'seal' are nearly the same thing; and, in consistency with this alteration, it may be observed that in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Double Marriage*, IV, iii, Virolet calls Julianna's hand 'white seal of virtue'—DYCE (*Rem.* p. 48): When Mr Collier offered [his] very unnecessary conjecture, *impress*, he did not see that these two rapturous encomiums on the hand of Helena have no connexion with each other. Demetrius terms it 'princess of pure white,' because its whiteness exceeded all other whiteness; and 'seal of bliss,' because it was to confirm the happiness of her accepted lover.

But you muſt ioyne in ſoules to mocke me to?
If you are men, as men you are in ſhow,
You would not vſe a gentle Lady ſo;
To vow, and ſweare, and ſuperpraiſe my parts,
When I am ſure you hate me with your hearts.
You both are Riuals, and loue *Hermia*;
And now both Riuals to mocke *Helena*.
A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,
To coniure teares vp in a poore maids eyes,
With your deriſion; none of noble ſort,
Would ſo offend a Virgin, and extort

155. *ioyne in ſoules*] *ioyne, in ſoules*, Q_1. *join in ſlouts* Han. *join in scorns* or *scoffs* Johns. conj. (withdrawn). *join, ill souls*, Tyrwhitt. *join in scouls* Blackstone (ap. *Var.*'85). *join in shoals* T. H. W. (*Gent. Mag.* lv, p. 278, 1785). *join in soul* Mason, Rann. *join, in sooth* Bailey (ii, 202). *join in taunts* Elze (*Athen.* 26 Oct. '67). *join in sport* Wetherell (*Athen.* 2 Nov.'67). *join in sports* D. Wilson. *join insults* Spedding (ap. *Cam.*), Leo (*Athen.* 27 Nov.'80).

155. *to?*] *too?* Q_2Ff.

156. *are men*] *were men* Qq, Han. Cap. et seq.

157. *ſo;*] *ſo?* Ff.

160, 161. *Riuals*] *Riuals...Riualles* Q_1.

164. *deriſion; none*] *deriſion None*, Q_1. *deriſion, none* Q_2. *derision! None* Theob.+, Steev. et seq. (subs.).

noble] *nobler* Rowe i, Theob. ii, Warb. Johns. Steev.'85.

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155. in soules] WARBURTON: This line is nonsense. It should read thus: 'But must join insolents to mock me too?'—STEEVENS: 'Join in souls' is to join heartily, unite in the same mind. [See Text. Notes for sundry emendations of a phrase which needs no help whatsoever. The notes attending these emendations are not here recorded; having no obscurity in the text to explain, they amount to but little else than an announcement by their authors of a preference of their own words to Shakespeare's.—ED.]

160, 161. As a warning against rearing any theory based on the spelling in the old eds., note the different spelling of 'rivals' in two consecutive lines in Q_1.

162. trim] SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) says that as an adjective this is 'mostly used with irony.' 'Mostly' is, I think, a little too comprehensive; that 'trim' is sometimes used ironically is true, but the same may be said of *fine, pretty*, and of many another adjective.—ED.

164. sort] MALONE: Here used for *degree* or *quality*. [Not necessarily referring to *rank*. although W. A. WRIGHT quotes Cotgrave: 'Gens de mise. Persons of worth, sort, qualitie.'—ED.]

165. extort] SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) defines this by *To wring, wrest*, and calls attention to the parallel meaning of *to move* or *wake* a person's patience, and therefore *to make impatient*, in *Much Ado*, V, i, 102: 'We will not wake your patience'; and in *Rich. III:* I, iii, 248: 'end thy frantic curse, Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.'—ALLEN (MS): May this not possibly mean: to produce by *torture* the *suffering* of a poor soul. To take away from a poor soul her patience, seems to me commonplace. For 'patience' compare 'I know your patience well,' III, i, 199.

A poore ſoules patience, all to make you ſport.
Lyſa. You are vnkind *Demetrius*; be not ſo,
For you loue *Hermia*; this you know I know;
And here with all good will, with all my heart,
In *Hermias* loue I yeeld you vp my part;
And yours of *Helena*, to me bequeath,
Whom I do lòue, and will do to my death.
Hel. Neuer did mockers waſt more idle breth.
Dem. *Lyſander*, keep thy *Hermia*, I will none:
If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.
My heart to her, but as gueſt-wiſe ſoiourn'd,
And now to *Helen* it is home return'd,
There to remaine.
Lyſ. It is not ſo.

169. *here*] *heare* Q_1. *heere* Q_2.
171. *yours of*] *your's of* Rowe i. *your's in* Coll. ii (MS).
172. *will do*] *will love* Cam. Edd. conj. *to my*] *till my* Q_1, Coll. White, Cam.
173. *waſt*] *waſte* QqFf.
176. *to her*] *with her* Johns. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Sing. Hal. Coll. ii, Dyce ii, iii, Ktly.
177. *it is*] *is it* Q_1, Cap. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam.
178. *There*] *There ever* Pope+.
179. *It is*] *Helen, it is* Q_1, Cap. et seq.

172. **will do**] The CAM. EDD. conjecture 'will *love*,' which is certainly an improvement, but then—

174. **none**] ABBOTT, § 53: 'None' is still used by us for *nothing*, followed by a partitive genitive, 'I had none of it'; and this explains the Elizabethan phrase, 'She will none of me.'—*Twelfth Night*, I, iii, 113.

176. **to her**] COLLIER 'reluctantly abandoned' this 'to' for JOHNSON'S emendation *with*, because 'the phrase is *sojourned with*, not *sojourned to*, although there was formerly great license in the use of prepositions.'—DYCE adopted *with* because the 'to' in this line was 'an error occasioned by the "to" immediately below.'—R. G. WHITE refused to change because it does not appear sufficiently clear that 'to' was not the old idiom.—DELIUS interprets 'to her' as generally equivalent to *as to her*, and in the present instance, by attraction from 'guestwise,' the phrase is equivalent to *as a guest to her*.—W. A. WRIGHT: There are other instances of 'to' in Shakespeare in a sense not far different from that in the present passage. Compare *Meas. for Meas.* I, ii, 186: 'Implore her in my voice that she make friends To the strict deputy.' *Two Gent.* I, i, 57: 'To Milan let me hear from thee by letters.' *Com. of Err.* IV, i, 49: 'You use this dalliance to excuse Your breach of promise to the Porpentine.' In all these cases the sense is quite clear, but there is a confusion in the construction. In the Devonshire dialect 'to' is frequently used for 'at,' and it is a common Americanism.—ALLEN (MS): May not this be like a familiar Greek construction? My heart [*went away* from its proper home] *to* her, and sojourned [with her] merely as a *guest*. Confirmed by: Now it has *returned* to me. Cf. Robert Browning's *Strafford* (p. 309), V, ii: 'You've been *to* Venice, father?'

179. **It is not so**] If one likes the pronunciation of 'Helen' with the accent on

De. Diſparage not the faith thou doſt not know,
Leſt to thy perill thou abide it deare.
Looke where thy Loue comes, yonder is thy deare.

Enter Hermia.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The eare more quicke of apprehenſion makes,
Wherein it doth impaire the ſeeing ſenſe,
Ir paies the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not by mine eye, *Lyſander* ſound,
Mine eare (I thanke it) brought me to that ſound.
But why vnkindly didſt thou leaue me ſo? (to go?
Lyſan. Why ſhould hee ſtay whom Loue doth preſſe
Her. What loue could preſſe *Lyſander* from my ſide?
Lyſ. *Lyſanders* loue (that would not let him bide)
Faire *Helena*; who more engilds the night,
Then all yon fierie oes, and eies of light.

181. *Leſt*] *Leaſt* Qq.
abide] *aby it* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, Coll. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. Ktly.
182. Scene VIII. Pope, Han. Scene VII. Warb. Johns.
187. *Ir*] F_1.
188. Lyſander] Lyſander, Q_1.
189. *brought*] *brooght* F_3.
that] *thy* Qq, Pope et seq.
193. (*that...bide*)] No parenthesis, Rowe et seq.
bide] *'bide* Theob. ii, Warb. Johns.
195. *oes*] *o's* F_4, Rowe+. *orbs* Grey.
eies] *eyes* F_3F_4.

the last syllable, there can be no objection to following the Q_1 here. But where a line is divided between two speakers, the inevitable pause is, I think, to be preferred in scansion to the stop-gap of an ill-accented word.—ED.

181. **abide**] The First Quarto's *aby* is here correct, the form 'abide' in the present phrase, according to SKEAT, is 'a mere corruption.'—W. A. WRIGHT [reading '*aby* it,' thus interprets:] That is, pay for it, atone for it. See below, line 353, and Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV, i, 53: 'Yet thou, false squire, his fault shalt deare aby.' The Ff read 'abide' in both passages, as does Q_2 here. There is another word *aby*, in an entirely different sense, which is etymologically the same as 'abide'; but our word is from the A.-S. *abicgan*, to redeem. And 'abide,' which is synonymous with the former, is often confounded with the latter. [See also line 452, below.]

181. **it deare**] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 307): Possibly *here; (heere—deare)*.

195. **oes**] STEEVENS: Shakespeare uses O for a circle. So in *Hen. V*, Prol. 13: 'may we cram Within this wooden O the very casques That did affright the air at Agincourt.' Again, in John Davies of Hereford's *Microcosmos*, 1605, p. 233: 'Which silver oes and spangles over-ran.'—STAUNTON: 'Oes' were small circular bosses of shining metal.—HALLIWELL cites: 'and oes, or spangs, as they are of no great cost, so are they of most glory.'—Bacon's *Essay*, xxxvii, p. 157, ed. Wright.

Why ſeek'ſt thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee, made me leaue thee ſo?
Her. You ſpeake not as you thinke; it cannot be.
Hel. Loe, ſhe is one of this confederacy,
Now I perceiue they haue conioyn'd all three,
To faſhion this falſe ſport in ſpight of me.
Iniurious Hermia, moſt vngratefull maid,
Haue you conſpir'd, haue you with theſe contriu'd
To baite me, with this foule deriſion?
Is all the counſell that we two haue ſhar'd,
The ſiſters vowes, the houres that we haue ſpent,
When wee haue chid the haſty footed time,
For parting vs; O, is all forgot?
All ſchooledaies friendſhip, child-hood innocence?
We Hermia, like two Artificiall gods,

197. *bare*] *bear* F_4, Rowe+, Dyce, Coll. Sta. Cam. i, Ktly, White ii.
201. *of me*] *to me* Johns.
206. *ſiſters vowes*] QqFf, Rowe+. *sister vows* Cap. *sister-vows* Dyce ii, iii. *sisters' vows* Steev. et cet.
208. *O, is all*] *O and is all* Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Steev. Knt, Hal. Sta. Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *O, is all now* Mal. *O, now, is all* Var. *Oh, is this all* Ktly. *Oh, is this then* Ktly conj. *O, is it all* Spedding (ap. Cam.), Glo. White ii. *O, is all this* Huds. conj.
209. *ſchooledaies*] *school-day* Cap. Steev.'85, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.
child-hood] *child-hoods* F_3F_4, Rowe i.
210. *two Artificiall gods*] *to artificer gods* or *two artificial buds* D. Wilson.

[Here, at least, we have a word which our German brothers must paraphrase. They cannot translate it literally, albeit Schlegel ventured it. The German capital O is apparently a circle drawn from the depths of the German consciousness; of course there had to be an æsthetic flourish in it. Is the supposition too fanciful that the punning on *o*'s and *i*'s begins with '*en*gilds'?—ED.]

206. **sisters vowes**] DYCE (ed. ii): Here the old eds. have '*sisters* vowes,' and a little below, '*schoole daies* friendship' (though in the same line with 'childhood innocence').

208. **O, is all forgot**] The Text. Notes show the harmless attempts to bring this line into the right butter-woman's rank to market. The break in the line gives ample pause for supplying a lost syllable. Moreover, the emotion expressed by 'O' can easily prolong the sound enough to fill the gap, and that, too, without lengthening it into an 'Irish howl,' as Steevens, with a malicious glance at Malone's nationality, once termed a similar suggestion by the latter.—ED.

208. **forgot**] REED: Mr Gibbon obſerves that in a poem of Gregory Nazianzen, on his own life, are some beautiful lines which burſt from the heart, and ſpeak the pangs of injured and loſt friendſhip, reſembling theſe. He adds, 'Shakeſpeare had never read the poems of Gregory Nazianzen; he was ignorant of the Greek language; but his mother-tongue, the language of nature, is the ſame in Cappadocia and in Britain.'—Gibbon's *Hiſt.* iii, 15.

Haue with our needles, created both one flower,
Both on one ſampler, ſitting on one cuſhion,
Both warbling of one ſong, both in one key;
As if our hands, our ſides, voices, and mindes
Had beene incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry ſeeming parted,
But yet a vnion in partition,

211. *Haue...both*] *Created with our needles both* Pope+.
needles] *neelds* Rann, Mal.'90, Steev.'93, Var. Knt, Sta. Dyce ii, iii.
214. *our ſides*] *and sides* Cap.
215. *beene*] *bin* Qq.
217. *yet*] Om. F_3F_4.
a vnion] *an vnion* QqF_4, Rowe+, Coll. Hal. White, Cam.

210. **Artificiall**] WALKER (*Crit.* i, 96): This is here used with reference to the agent; *deabus artificibus similes*.—WALKER (*Ib.* i, 154) in his valuable chapter on 'Ovid's influence on Shakespeare' suggests that there is in these lines an unconscious allusion to the story of Arachne and Minerva ('with a variety') which had impressed Shakespeare in reading.—For a list of adjectives which have both an active and a passive meaning, see ABBOTT, § 3.—GEO. GOULD (p. 15): Read 'artificial *girls*,' viz. Helena and Hermia, who are like a pair of girls in waxwork. [Gifford's vocation of censor is as necessary as it is unenviable. Gifford should have died hereafter.—ED.]

211. **needles**] STEEVENS: This was probably written by Shakespeare *neelds* (a common contraction in the Inland counties at this day), otherwise the verse would be inharmonious.—ABBOTT, § 465: 'Needle,' which in *Gammer Gurton* rhymes with 'feele,' is often pronounced as a monosyllable. 'Deep clerks she dumbs, and with her need*le* composes.'—*Per.* V, Gower, 5; 'I would they were in Afric both together; myself by with a need*le* that I might prick.'—*Cym.* I, i, 168; 'Or when she would with sharp need*le* wound.'—*Per.* IV, Gower, 23. In the latter passage 'needle wound' is certainly harsh, though Gower does bespeak allowance for his verse. A. J. ELLIS suggests '*ld* for 'would,' which removes the harshness. 'And grl | ping lt | the nèed*le* | his fln | ger pricks.'—*R. of L.* 319; 'Their nèed*les* | to làn | ces, and | their gènt | le hèarts.'—*King John*, V, ii, 157; 'To threàd | the pòst | ern òf | a smàll | need*le*'s èye.'—*Rich. II.* V, v, 17. 'Needle's' seems harsh, and it would be more pleasing to modern readers to scan 'the pòst | ern òf a | small neè | dle's èye.' But this verse, in conjunction with *Per.* IV, Gower 23, may indicate that 'needle' was pronounced as it was sometimes written, very much like *neeld*, and the *d* in *neeld*, as in *vild* (vile), may have been scarcely perceptible.—CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: Pope's reading is rendered extremely improbable by the occurrence of the word 'Have' at the beginning of the line in all the old copies, and could only have been suggested by what Pope considered the exigencies of the metre. 'Needles' may have been pronounced as Steevens writes it, *neelds*; but, if not, the line is harmonious enough. [One instance of 'needle' no one, I believe, has noticed, where it must be pronounced as a disyllable. It occurs in *R. of L.*, within two lines, strangely enough, of the line cited by Abbott: 'Lucretia's glove, wherein the needle sticks,' line 217. This proves, I think, that the word was pronounced by Shakespeare either as a monosyllable or as a disyllable, according to the needs of his rhythm.—ED.]

Two louely berries molded on one ſtem, 218
So with two ſeeming bodies, but one heart,
Two of the firſt life coats in Heraldry, 220

218. *louely*] *loving* Coll. ii, iii (MS).
219. *So*] *Or* Han.
220. *firſt life*] *first life*, Ff, Rowe, Pope. *first, like* Folks, Theob. et seq.
220, 221. Om. Coll. MS.

218. **louely**] COLLIER (ed. ii): It is unlikely that Helen would call herself a *lovely* berry. The change to *loving* is in the MS, and it is precisely the thought which the speaker is carrying on; we have no doubt Shakespeare wrote *loving*. Elsewhere the same misprint occurs.—DYCE (ed. ii): But was not 'lovely' sometimes used as equivalent to *loving*? Compare our author's *Tam. of the Shr.* III, ii: 'And seal the title with a *lovely* kiss'; also, 'And I will give thee many a *lovely* kiss.'—Peele's *Arraignment of Paris—Works*, p. 358, ed. Dyce, 1861. 'A father, brother, and a vowèd friend. *K. of Eng.* Link all these *lovely* styles, good king, in one.'—Greene's *James IV—Works*, p. 189, ed. Dyce, 1861. [Collier might not unreasonably answer Dyce, that all these three examples are exactly the misprints which he said might be found elsewhere, and that they corroborate the emendation of the MS, which seems, it must be confessed, unusually happy to the present ED.]

220. **of the first life**] THEOBALD: The true correction of this passage [the change of 'life' to *like*] I owe to the friendship and communication of the ingenious Martin Folks, Esq. Two of the first, second, &c. are terms peculiar to Heraldry to distinguish the different Quarterings of Coats.—M. MASON: Every branch of a family is called 'a house,' and none but the 'first' of the 'first house' can bear the arms of a family without some distinction. 'Two of the first,' therefore, means *two coats of the first house*, which are properly 'due but to one.' [This explanation seems to have satisfied no subsequent editor except KNIGHT.]—RITSON (*Cursory Crit.* 44): The two 'seeming bodies' united by 'one heart' are resembled to *coats in heraldry, crowned with one crest.* And this happens either where the *heir* keeps his *paternal* and *maternal* coats, or *the husband his own* and *his wife's* in *separate shields*, as is done on the Continent; or, as at present with us, in the quarterings of the same shield; in both cases there are 'two coats, due but to one, and crowned with one crest,' which is clearly the author's allusion. But I am sorry to add that he must have entirely misunderstood, since he has so strangely misapplied, the expression 'Two of the first,' which, in heraldical jargon, always means *two* objects *of the first* colour mentioned, that is, the *field*. For instance, in blazoning a coat they will say, *Argent*, upon a fesse *gules*, *two* mullets *of the first*, that is, *argent*, the colour of the *field*. These words are, therefore, a melancholy proof that our great author sometimes retained the phrase after he had lost the idea or [applied] the former without sufficient precaution as to the latter. [If the 'heraldical jargon' of the whole passage is confined to these two lines, and if 'first' is a technical term, which can refer only to colour, then Ritson is technically right, and the greatness of a name cannot excuse a blunder. But DOUCE (i, 194) thinks that a deeper heraldic meaning is here imputed to Shakespeare than he intended, and that 'first' does not refer to colour. 'Helen,' says Douce, 'exemplifies her position by a simile,—"we had *two of the first*, i. e. *bodies*, like the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as *one person*, but which, like our *single heart*, have but *one crest*."' This is certainly a common-sense explanation. W. A. WRIGHT says it is 'the correct one.' Staunton,

Due but to one and crowned with one creſt. 221
And will you rent our ancient loue aſunder,
To ioyne with men in ſcorning your poore friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly.
Our ſexe as well as I, may chide you for it, 225

221. *creſt*] *creaſt* Q_1. 222. *rent*] *rend* Rowe+, Coll. White i.

however, shows that there is more 'heraldical jargon' in the passage than had been hitherto supposed, and that 'first' may perhaps apply neither to 'colour' nor to 'bodies,' but to heraldical 'partitions.']—STAUNTON: The plain heraldical allusion is to the simple impalements of two armorial ensigns, as they are marshalled side by side to represent a marriage; and the expression 'Two of the First' is to *that particular form of dividing the shield, being the first in order of the nine ordinary partitions of the Escutcheon.* These principles were familiarly understood in the time of Shakespeare by all the readers of the many very popular heraldical works of the period, and an extract from one of these will probably render the meaning of the passage clear. In *The Accidence of Armorie*, by Gerard Leigh, 1597, he says, 'Now will I declare to you of IX sundrie Partitions: the *First whereof is a partition from the highest part of the Escocheon to the lowest. And though it must be blazed so, yet it is a joining together.* It is also as a mariage, that is to say, *two cotes;* the man's on the right side, and the woman's on the left; as it might be said that Argent had married with Gules.' In different words, this is nothing else than an amplification of Helena's own expression,—'seeming parted; But yet a union in partition.' The shield bearing the arms of two married persons would of course be surmounted by one crest only, as the text properly remarks, that of the husband. In Shakespeare's day the only pleas for bearing two crests were ancient usage or a special grant. The modern practice of introducing a second crest by an heiress has been most improperly adopted from the German heraldical system; for it should be remembered that as a female cannot wear a helmet, so neither can she bear a crest. [The solitary objection which I can see to Staunton's explanation, and it is one of small moment, is that 'partition' is in the singular. Had Helen's phrase been 'a union in partitions,' Staunton's argument would be, I think, indisputable. As the text stands, however, I doubt if Shakespeare's thoughts were turned thus early to heraldry; 'partition' was the logical word to use after 'parted' in the preceding line; but the very sound of the word in Shakespeare's mental ear may have started a train of heraldical imagery which found expression later on. Although 'partition' is a technical term, I do not think the real heraldry begins until we come to 'Two of the first,' when, having mentioned 'partition' and referred to bodies before he referred to hearts, he used 'first' as satisfying the former, 'partition,' and as pointing to the latter, 'bodies.' So that Douce and Staunton may be measurably harmonised, and Ritson is wrong in thinking that Shakespeare blundered. So far from being remiss in his heraldry, he was so at home in it that he could play with its terms. DYCE merely quotes Douce and Staunton at length, but expresses no opinion.—ED.]

222. rent] W. A. WRIGHT: The old form of *rend.* Compare *A Lover's Complaint*, 55: 'This said, in top of rage the lines she rents.' It occurs also in several passages of *The Authorised Version*, but has been modernised in later editions, and is left only in *Jer.* iv, 30.

Though I alone doe feele the iniurie.
Her. I am amazed at your paſſionate words,
I ſcorne you not; It ſeemes that you ſcorne me.
Hel. Haue you not ſet *Lyſander*, as in ſcorne
To follow me, and praiſe my eies and face?
And made your other loue, *Demetrius*
(Who euen but now did ſpurne me with his foote)
To call me goddeſſe, nimph, diuine, and rare,
Precious, celeſtiall? Wherefore ſpeakes he this
To her he hates? And wherefore doth *Lyſander*
Denie your loue (ſo rich within his ſoule)
And tender me (forſooth) affection,
But by your ſetting on, by your conſent?
What though I be not ſo in grace as you,
So hung vpon with loue, ſo fortunate?
(But miſerable moſt, to loue vnlou'd)
This you ſhould pittie, rather then deſpiſe.
Her. I vnderſtand not what you meane by this.

227. *I am*] *Helen, I am* Pope, Han. *paſſionate*] Om. Qq, Pope, Han.
240. *loue*] *loves* Cap.
240, 241. *fortunate?...vnlou'd*)]*fortunate;...unlov'd?* Theob. *fortunate,... unlov'd!* Knt. *fortunate,...unlov'd,* Coll. *fortunate,...unlov'd...* Ktly.

225. **for it**] WALKER (*Vers.* 79): It may be remarked that *on't*, *for't*, and the like, at the end of verses, have in many instances been corrupted into *of it*, *for it*, &c. So with *it*, in general, at the end of a line. An ear properly imbued with the Shakespearian rhythm in general, and with certain plays in particular,—I mean the earlier dramas (the *Mid. N. D.* for instance) in which double endings to the lines occur comparatively seldom,—invariably detects the fault. [In the present line 'for it'] sensibly infringes on the '*monosyllabo-teleutic*' flow of the poem. Read *for't*.

227. **passionate**] The omission of this emphatic word in Q_2, from which the Folio was printed, is another cumulative proof that this Qto had been a play-house copy, and had in it omissions supplied and corrections made, before it came to be used as the original from which the Folio was set up.—ED.

230. **me . . . my**] See 'my,' I, i, 200.

232. **euen but now**] ABBOTT, § 38: '*Even* now' with us is applied to an action that has been going on for some long time and *still* continues, the emphasis being laid on 'now.' In Shakespeare the emphasis is often to be laid on *even*, and '*even* now' means '*exactly* or *only* now,' *i. e.* scarcely longer ago than the present; hence '*but* now.' We use '*just* now' for the Shakespearian '*even* now,' laying the emphasis on 'just.' [See *Mer. of Ven.* III, ii, 176, and *As You Like It*, II, vii, 4 of this ed., where this same note of Abbott is quoted.]

240. **hung vpon**] ALLEN (MS): May not this be here used as it is in *Sonn.* xxxi, 10: 'Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,' and in *Jul. Cæs.* I, i, 74: 'let no images Be hung with Cæsar's trophies'?

Hel. I, doe, perſeuer, counterfeit ſad lookes,
Make mouthes vpon me when I turne my backe,
Winke each at other, hold the ſweete ieſt vp:
This ſport well carried, ſhall be chronicled.
If you haue any pittie, grace, or manners,
You would not make me ſuch an argument:
But fare ye well, 'tis partly mine owne fault,
Which death or abſence ſoone ſhall remedie.
Lyſ. Stay gentle *Helena*, heare my excuſe,
My loue, my life, my ſoule, faire *Helena.*
Hel. O excellent!
Her. Sweete, do not ſcorne her ſo.
Dem. If ſhe cannot entreate, I can compell.
Lyſ. Thou canſt compell, no more then ſhe entreate.
Thy threats haue no more ſtrength then her weak praiſe.
Helen, I loue thee, by my life I doe;

244. *I, doe, perſeuer*] *I doe. Perſeuer* Q_1. *I do, perſever* F_4. *Ay, do, persevere* Rowe, Johns. *Ay do, persever* Pope. *I do;—perceive* D. Wilson. *Ay, do, persever* Theob. et seq.
245. *mouthes*] *mows* Steev. Var. Knt.
246. *ieſt*] *ieaſt* Qq.
248. *haue*] *hdd* Coll. ii (MS), Huds.
250. *fare ye well*] *faryewell* Q_2.
mine] *my* Q_1, Cam. White ii.
253. *my life*] Om. Ff, Rowe.
255. [To Lys. Cap.
256. *cannot*] *can not* Cap. (Errata).
257. *compell, no more*] *compell no more*, Q_1. *compell no more* F_3F_4, Rowe et seq.
258. *praiſe*] *prays* Cap. Mal. '90. *prayers* Theob. et cet.
259. Helen,] Helen. F_4 (as though Helena were the speaker).

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244. **I, doe,**] HUNTER (*Illust.* i, 296) pronounces the usual reading, 'Ay, do,' 'bad,' and upholds Q_1, wherein he hears the 'grave and serious tone' in which Helen replies to Hermia's assertion: 'I understand not what you mean by this.'

244. **perseuer**] For other examples of this same accent, see ABBOTT, § 492.

246. **hold . . . vp**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, keep it going, carry it on. Compare *Merry Wives*, V, v, 109: 'I pray you, come, hold up the jest no higher.' And *Much Ado*, II, iii, 126: 'He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up'; that is, keep up the sport.

249. **argument**] JOHNSON: Such a *subject* of light merriment.

258. **praise**] THEOBALD: In the preceding line there is an antithesis betwixt 'compel' and 'entreat'; this contrast is wanting in 'threats' and 'praise'; wherefore we need make no difficulty of substituting *prayers*. Indeed, my suspicion is that the poet might have coined a substantive plural (from the verb *to pray*), *prays*, i. e. *prayings, entreaties, beseechings;* and the identity of sound might give birth to the corruption of it into 'praise.'—CAPELL (who adopted Theobald's conjecture): 'Prays' (a *nomen verbale*) is a bold coinage, but proper; has the sense of *prayers*, but with more contempt in it; the sound perfectly of the word it gave birth to, and its form nearly when that word was writ—*prayse*. [Theobald's conjecture is plausible. It is quite

I ſweare by that which I will loſe for thee,
To proue him falſe, that ſaies I loue thee not.
Dem. I ſay, I loue thee more then he can do.
Lyſ. If thou ſay ſo, with-draw and proue it too.
Dem. Quick, come.
Her. *Lyſander*, whereto tends all this?
Lyſ. Away, you *Ethiope.*
Dem. No, no, Sir, ſeeme to breake looſe;
Take on as you would follow,

260. *loſe*] *looſe* Q_1.
263. *too*] *to* Qq. *true* Anon. conj.
264. *come.*] *come,*— Cap. *come!* Dyce.
266. Ethiope] *Ethiop, you* Heath. [Holding him. Coll.
267. *No, no, Sir, ſeeme*] *No, no; heele Seeme* Q_1. *No, no, hee'l ſeeme* Q_2. *No no, he'll seem* Pope+, Steev.'85, Hal. *No, no; he'll not come.—Seem* Cap. Rann. *No no; he'll—sir, Seem* Mal. Var. *No, no, sir:—he will Seem* Steev.'93. *No, no, sir:—seem* Knt, Sing. ii, Dyce i, White i, Rolfe. *No, no, he'll—Seem* Coll. Sta. White ii. *No, no; he'll... Seem* Cam. Cla. *No, no, sir; you Seem* Lettsom, Dyce ii, iii. *No, no, sir:—do; Seem* Huds. *No, no; he'll but Seem* Nicholson (ap. Cam.). *No! no, sir; thou'lt Seem* Kinnear. *No, no: he'll not stir* (or *not budge*) *Seem* or *No, no, sir, no: Seem* Schmidt. Her. *No, no; he'll—* Dem. *Seem* Joicey (*N. & Q.* 11 Feb.'93).
267, 268. *ſeeme...follow*] One line, Q_1, Cap. et seq.
to...follow] One line, Pope+, Ktly (the latter reading *you'd follow me*).
267. *to breake looſe*] *To break away* Pope+.
268. *you*] *he* Pope+, Coll. iii.

in Shakespeare's manner to form such nouns from verbs, and in the present case, as Theobald says, *prays* is *idem sonans* with the text.—ED.]

266. Ethiope] From this we learn that Hermia is a brunette, just as we are shortly told that she is low of stature.—ED.

267. No . . . seeme] MALONE: This passage, like almost all in which there is a sudden transition or the sense is hastily broken off, is much corrupted in the old copies. . . . Demetrius, I suppose, would say, No, no; he'll not have the resolution to disengage himself from Hermia. But, turning abruptly to Lysander, he addresses him ironically: 'Sir, seem to break loose,' &c. [See Text. Notes for Malone's composite text.]—HALLIWELL [who follows the Qq]: The opening of this speech seems to be in relation, very ironically, to Lysander's previous one, implying that he is making no real effort to detach himself from the lady. Demetrius then personally addresses Lysander in the most provoking language that presents itself.—HUDSON modifies Lettsom's conjecture, adopted by Dyce, by substituting *do* for *you*, and thus justifies it: Demetrius is taunting Lysander, as if the latter were making believe that he wants to break loose from Hermia, who is clinging to him, and go apart with Demetrius and fight it out. This sense, it seems to me, is much better preserved by *do* than by *you*. We have had a like use of *do* a little before: 'Ay, do, persever,' &c. Also in *King Lear*, I, i: 'Do; kill thy physician,' &c.—W. A. WRIGHT: Unless a line has fallen out, this reading [see Text. Notes] gives as good a sense as any. Demetrius first addresses Hermia, and then breaks off abruptly to taunt Lysander with not showing much eagerness to follow him.—D. WILSON (p. 255): A pair of distracted

But yet come not: you are a tame man, go.
Lyſ. Hang off thou cat, thou bur; vile thing let looſe,
Or I will ſhake thee from me like a ſerpent.
Her. Why are you growne ſo rude?
What change is this ſweete Loue?
Lyſ. Thy loue? out tawny *Tartar*, out;
Out loathed medicine; O hated poiſon hence.
Her. Do you not ieſt?
Hel. Yes ſooth, and ſo do you.
Lyſ. *Demetrius*: I will keepe my word with thee.
Dem. I would I had your bond: for I perceiue
A weake bond holds you; Ile not trust your word.
Lyſ. What, ſhould I hurt her, ſtrike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, Ile not harme her ſo.
Her. What, can you do me greater harme then hate?

269. *tame man*] *tameman* Walker (*Crit.* ii, 136).
270. *off*] *of* Q_2.
bur] *but* Ff.
272, 273. *Why...this*] One line, Q_2, Pope et seq.
273. *this ſweete Loue?*] *this? Sweet love!* Pope+. *this? Sweet love,*— Cam. White ii.
275. *O*] *ô* Qq. Om. Pope+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, Cam. Dyce ii, iii, Ktly, White ii.
poiſon] *potion* Q_2, Cap. Steev. Mal. Coll. Dyce, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii.
281, 283. *What,*] *What?* Q_2. *What!* Coll. ii, iii.
283. *What...harme*] *What greater harm can you do me* Han.
hate] *harm* F_4.

lovers, set at cross purposes by Puck's knavish blundering, are giving vent to the most extravagant violence of language. Helena says, a very little before, 'O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent,' &c. In like fashion, as it appears to me, Demetrius now exclaims, in language perfectly consistent with the rude epithets Lysander is heaping on Hermia, 'No, no; hell Seems to break loose; take on as you would, fellow!'—BULLOCH (p. 62): The utterances of Demetrius at what is passing are astonishment, interpretation of it, sarcastic advice, a summons to a challenge, and an ironical compliment, ending with a contemptuous dismissal. [Therefore read] '*Now, now*, Sir! *Hell's abyss Seems* to break loose; take on as you would *flow*, But yet come *on*.' Lysander would appear to be as Sebastian, in *The Tempest, standing water;* and Demetrius as Antonio would excite him to action and teach him how to *flow*. [With the majority of editors I think the whole line is addressed to Lysander, but I do not think that 'No, no, Sir' has any reference to Hermia's having been called an 'Ethiop.' Demetrius shows no such zeal when Lysander afterward showers opprobrious epithets on the damsel. To my ears 'No, no, Sir' is a taunting sneer, in modern street-language, 'No you don't! You can't come that game over me!' and Lettsom's emendation follows well: 'You merely seem to break loose,' &c.—ED.]

274. tawny] Another reference to Hermia's brunette complexion.—ED.

280. weake bond] Alluding to Hermia's arms, which were clinging around Lysander. Demetrius scornfully intimates that Lysander, from cowardice, does not really wish to be free. This explains Lysander's vehement reply—ED.

Hate me, wherefore? O me, what newes my Loue?
Am not I *Hermia*? Are not you *Lyſander?*
I am as faire now, as I was ere while.
Since night you lou'd me; yet ſince night you left me.
Why then you left me (O the gods forbid
In earneſt, ſhall I ſay?

284. *newes*] *means* Coll. ii, iii (MS), Sing. ii, Ktly, Marshall. 288. *forbid*'] *forbid*) QqFf. *forbid!* Rowe. *forbid it!* Theob. Warb. Johns.

281, 283. In the way of punctuation, I prefer the interrogative 'What?' of Q_4 to the 'What!' of Collier and the 'What' of all the rest.—ED.

284. wherefore] For other instances where the stronger accent is on the second syllable, see WALKER (*Vers.* III), or ABBOTT, § 490.

284. newes] COLLIER (ed. ii): For more than two hundred years the text here was the ridiculous question 'what *news*, my love?' It has been repeated in edition after edition, ancient and modern; and so it might have continued but for the discovery of the MS, which shows that *means* has always been misprinted 'news.'—LETTSOM (*Blackwood's Maga.* Aug. 1853) thinks that this change of the MS 'seems to be right.' —HALLIWELL thinks it 'very plausible, but unnecessary. "What news?" here means What *novelty* is this?'—DYCE (ed. ii): We have a passage in *Tam. of the Shr.* I, i, which makes the alteration of Collier's MS a doubtful one: there Lucentio exchanges dress with his servant Tranio; presently Lucentio's other servant, Biondello, enters, and exclaims in great surprise, 'Master, has my fellow Tranio stol'n your clothes? Or you stol'n his? or both? pray, what's the news?'—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Collier's MS substitution is one of the most plausible readings [in the list]. But when we also consider that as this is Hermia's first interview with her lover since Puck's application of the flower to his eyes, she may well express surprise at the novelty of his declaration that he hates her; and when, besides, we find the same word, 'newes,' in the QqFf, there does not seem to be sufficient warrant for a change in the authentic text. —MARSHALL (*Irving Sh.*): I cannot find a single instance in which 'What news?' or 'What news with you?' is not addressed to some person who has only just appeared on the scene. . . . But Hermia is here under the influence of strong emotion. Is it likely, under such circumstances, that she would employ such a colloquial phrase? Were she less in earnest, less deeply wounded, and playing the part of an indignant coquette, whose philanderings had been discovered, she might say, 'What new-fangled notion is this of your hating me?' But she is too much in earnest to play with words. The exclamation 'O me!' is not one of skittish and affected suspense; it is a cry of real mental anguish; and I cannot think any one with a due sense of dramatic fitness would admit the reading 'what news?' in the sense accepted by all the commentators. [We must doggedly shut our eyes to the substitution of any phrase, which is merely an alleged improvement where the sense of the original texts is clear. It seems to have been generally supposed that 'What news?' can be uttered only in an idle, indifferent way, but it is conceivable that very tragic pathos can be imparted to the word 'news.' Moreover, the continuity of thought upholds the original text in contrasting the new present with the old past: 'I am as fair *now* as I *was*,' &c. Above all, the sound rule that *durior lectio preferenda est* should be ever present. —ED.]

Lyſ. I, by my life; 290
And neuer did deſire to ſee thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of queſtion, of doubt;
Be certaine, nothing truer: 'tis no ieſt,
That I doe hate thee, and loue *Helena.*
Her. O me, you iugler, you canker bloſſome, 295
You theefe of loue; What, haue you come by night,
And ſtolne my loues heart from him?
Hel. Fine yfaith:
Haue you no modeſty, no maiden ſhame, 299

292. *of doubt*] *doubt* Pope+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Sta. Dyce ii, iii, Coll. iii. Om. Anon. (ap. Cam.).
293. *certaine,*] *certaine:* Qq.
295. *iugler, you*] *jugler, oh you* Pope+, Steev.'85. *jugler, you! you* Cap. *juggleer, you* Ktly.
298. *yfaith*] *Ifaith* Q_1. *ifaith* Q_2.

292. **Therefore . . . doubt**] To cure this Alexandrine, Pope omitted 'of' before 'doubt'; which is effective if 'question' be pronounced as a disyllable, as is allowable.—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 49) proposed to print 'Therefore' as a separate line, which is merely a deference paid to the eye.—In support of Pope, LETTSOM (ap. Dyce) cites: 'Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field.'—SCHMIDT (*Programm*, p. 6) transposed the words, so as to read, 'Therefore be out of hope, of doubt, of question,' which is good. But, after all, it seems to me to be better to accept it as an incorrigible Alexandrine, necessitated by the need that each clause should have its fullest effect and be cumulative up to the climax.—ED.

295. **iugler**] MALONE, WALKER (*Vers.* 8), ABBOTT, § 477, all pronounce this word *juggeler*—a needless deformity, when an exclamation-mark can take the place of a syllable.—ED.

295. **canker-blossom**] STEEVENS: This is not here the blossom of the *canker* or *wild rose*, alluded to in *Much Ado*, I, iii, 28: 'I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace,' but a worm that preys on the buds of flowers. So in II, ii, 4 of this play: 'Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds.' [Albeit there is abundant evidence to show that Steevens was acquainted with Capell's *Notes*, no blame can attach to him for overlooking explanations imbedded in that gnarled and almost unwedgeable mass. Witness the following, on the present line: 'Judges of nature's language in situations like that of the speaker will be at no loss to decide instantaneously which line should have preference, theirs [i. e. other editors], or that of this copy: The first component of the word it [*i. e.* the line] concludes with is a verb; the compound was overlook'd, or had had a place in the *Glossary* [*i. e.* Capell's own Glossary]; what is said of it now will make it clear to all Englishmen.' In reference to these notes well did Lettsom parody Johnson's panegyric on Addison: 'Whoever wishes to attain an English style uncouth without simplicity, obscure without conciseness, and slovenly without ease, must give his nights and days to the Notes of Capell.' The provoking part of it is that Capell's meaning is too good to be disregarded. We cannot afford to overlook it. In the present instance he is exactly right. 'You canker-blossom' is not 'you blossom eaten by a canker,' but 'you who cankers blossoms.'—ED.]

No touch of baſhfulneſſe? What, will you teare
Impatient anſwers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet, you.
Her. Puppet? why ſo? I, that way goes the game.
Now I perceiue that ſhe hath made compare
Betweene our ſtatures, ſhe hath vrg'd her height,
And with her perſonage, her tall perſonage,
Her height (forſooth) ſhe hath preuail'd with him.
And are you growne ſo high in his eſteeme,
Becauſe I am ſo dwarfiſh, and ſo low?
How low am I, thou painted May-pole? Speake,
How low am I? I am not yet ſo low,
But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.
Hel. I pray you though you mocke me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me; I was neuer curſt:

302. *counterfeit*] *counterfait* Q_1. *counterfet* Q_2.
303. *why ſo?*] *why, ſo:* Theob. Warb. Johns. Dyce.
303. *way goes*] *ways go* Rowe, Pope.
306. *tall perſonage*] *tall parſonage* Q_2.
313. *gentlemen*] *gentleman* Q_1.

301. **tongue?**] Note the genesis of a sophistication. This interrogation mark became in F_3, by accident, a parenthesis: 'tongue)' This caught the eye of the compositor of F_4 in setting up from F_3, and supposing that the preceding half of the parenthesis had been omitted, supplied it, and enclosed the whole line in parentheses, to the confusion of the sense.—ED.

304. **compare**] For other instances of the conversion of one part of speech into another, see ABBOTT, § 451.

306. **And . . . personage**] ABBOTT, § 476, thus scans: 'And with | her pèrson | age, hèr | tall pèr | sonàge,' as an illustration of his rule that when a word is repeated twice in a verse, and increases in emphasis, it receives one accent the first time and two accents the second. The result here is, I think, neither smoothness nor due emphasis. I prefer, 'And with | her pèr | sŏnăge | her tàll | pĕrsŏnăge,' that is, the two strongly emphasized words are, the first 'personage' and 'tall.'—ED.

310. **painted May-pole**] STEEVENS: So in Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583 [p. 149, ed. *New Sh. Soc.*]: 'They haue twentie or fortie yoke of Oxen, euery Oxe hauing a sweet nose-gay of flouers placed on the tip of his hornes; and these Oxen drawe home this May-pole (this stinking Ydol, rather) which is couered all ouer with floures and hearbs, bound round about with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometime painted with variable colours.'—HALLIWELL gives many extracts to show the antiquity and fashion of painted May-poles, and quotes an observation by Fairholt that 'the term applied by Hermia to Helena is a sort of inseparable conjunction, when the old custom of painting the May-pole is duly considered, and conveys a deeper satire than that applied to her height alone.' [This is doubtless true, but, at the same time, it is possible that in the epithet 'painted' there may be an allusion to the clear red and white of Helena's blonde complexion.—ED.]

I haue no gift at all in ſhrewiſhneſſe;
I am a right maide for my cowardize;
Let her not ſtrike me: you perhaps may thinke,
Becauſe ſhe is ſomething lower then my ſelfe,
That I can match her.
Her. Lower? harke againe.
Hel. Good *Hermia*, do not be ſo bitter with me,
I euermore did loue you *Hermia*,
Did euer keepe your counſels, neuer wronged you,
Saue that in loue vnto *Demetrius*,
I told him of your ſtealth vnto this wood.
He followed you, for loue I followed him,
But he hath chid me hence, and threatned me
To ſtrike me, ſpurne me, nay to kill me too;
And now, ſo you will let me quiet go,
To *Athens* will I beare my folly backe,
And follow you no further. Let me go.
You ſee how ſimple, and how fond I am.
Her. Why get you gone: who iſt that hinders you?
Hel. A fooliſh heart, that I leaue here behinde.
Her. What, with *Lyſander*?
Her. With *Demetrius*.
Lyſ. Be not afraid, ſhe ſhall not harme thee *Helena*.
Dem. No ſir, ſhe ſhall not, though you take her part.

318. *ſhe is*] QqF$_2$F$_3$, Coll. White, Cam. *ſhe's* F$_4$ et cet.
323. *wronged*] *wrongd* Q$_2$, Rowe et seq. (subs.).
325. *vnto this*] *into this* F$_4$, Rowe i. *into the* Rowe ii, Pope, Han.
326. *followed you*] *follow'd you* Rowe et seq.
326. *followed him*] *followd him* F$_2$, Rowe et seq.
328. *too*] *to* Qq.
333. *Why*] *Why?* Q$_1$.
336. Her.] F$_2$. Hel. QqF$_3$F$_4$ et cet.
337. *ſhall*] *will* F$_4$, Rowe, Pope, Han. Helena] *Helen* Walker, Dyce ii iii.

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314. curſt] STEEVENS: That is, shrewish or mischievous.—W. A. WRIGHT: So in *Tam. of the Shr.* I, i, 186: 'Her eldest sister is so curst and shrewd'; in *Much Ado*, II, i, 22: 'For it is said, God sends a curst cow short horns.' Cotgrave defines, 'Meschant. Wicked, impious, vngracious, . . . also curst, mischievous, harsh, froward.'

316. right] ABBOTT, § 19: This was used by Shakespeare with the indefinite article, to mean *real*, down-*right*.

329. ſo] See I, i, 47.

332. fond] That is, foolish. See Shakespeare *passim*.

337. Helena] See II, ii, 110.

Hel. O when ſhe's angry, ſhe is keene and ſhrewd,
She was a vixen when ſhe went to ſchoole,
And though ſhe be but little, ſhe is fierce.
Her. Little againe? Nothing but low and little?
Why will you ſuffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.
Lyſ. Get you gone you dwarfe,
You *minimus*, of hindring knot-graſſe made,
You bead, you acorne.
Dem. You are too officious,
In her behalfe that ſcornes your ſeruices.
Let her alone, ſpeake not of *Helena*,
Take not her part. For if thou doſt intend

339. *ſhe's*] *ſhe is* Q_2. 346. minimus] *Minim, you*, Theob. ii, Han.

340. vixen] W. A. WRIGHT: Properly, a she-fox. The form of the word is especially interesting as being the only instance in which the feminine termination *-en* has been preserved. See Morris, *English Accidence*, c. x, § 73. It occurs in Anglo-Saxon as *fixen*, and in German as *füchsin*.

346. minimus] THEOBALD: This is no term of art, that I can find; and I can scarce be willing to think that Shakespeare would use the masculine of an adjective to a woman. I doubt not but he might have wrote, 'You *Minim, you*,' i. e. you diminutive of the creation, you reptile.—NARES: The word came into use probably from the musical term *minim*, which, in the very old notation, was the shortest note, though now one of the longest.

346. knot-grasse] STEEVENS: It appears that 'knot-grass' was anciently supposed to prevent the growth of any animal or child. See Beaumont & Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* [II, ii, p. 157, ed. Dyce]: 'Should they put him into a straight pair of gaskins, 'twere worse than knot-grass; he would never grow after it.' Again, in *The Coxcomb* [II, ii, p. 150, ed. Dyce]: 'We want a boy extremely for this function, Kept under for a year with milk and knot-grass.'—ELLACOMBE (p. 101): The *Polygonum aviculare*, a British weed, low, straggling, and many-jointed, hence its name of Knot-grass. There may be another explanation of 'hindering' than that given by Steevens. Johnstone tells us that in the North, 'being difficult to cut in the harvest time, or to pull in the process of weeding, it has obtained the sobriquet of the Deil's-lingels.' From this it may well be called 'hindering,' just as the *Ononis*, from the same habit of catching the plough and harrow, has obtained the prettier name of 'Rest-harrow.' [To the same effect GREY (i, 61). 'Hindering' applies not only to 'knot-grass,' but also to Hermia; hence it becomes, in reality, a botanical pun.—ED.]

347. bead] W. A. WRIGHT: As beads were generally black, there is a reference here to Hermia's complexion as well as to her size.

351. intend] STEEVENS: That is, pretend. So in *Much Ado*, II, ii, 35: 'Intend a kind of zeal both to the Prince and Claudio.'

Neuer ſo little ſhew of loue to her,
Thou ſhalt abide it.
Lyſ. Now ſhe holds me not,
Now follow if thou dar'ſt, to try whoſe right,
Of thine or mine is moſt in *Helena.*
Dem. Follow? Nay, Ile goe with thee cheeke by iowle. *Exit Lyſander and Demetrius.*
Her. You Miſtris, all this coyle is long of you.
Nay, goe not backe.
Hel. I will not truſt you I,
Nor longer ſtay in your curſt companie.
Your hands then mine, are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though to runne away.
[**Her.* I am amaz'd, and know not what to ſay. *Exeunt.*]

353. *abide*] *abie* Q_2. *aby* Q_1, Pope et seq.
356. *Of*] *Or* Theob. Warb. Johns. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Sing. Coll. ii, iii (MS), Sta.
358. Exit...] Exit. Q_2. Om. Q_1.
359. *long*] *'long* Cap. et seq. (except Hal. Dyce).
361. *you I,*] *you, I,* Q_1. *you* Rowe i.
364. *away.*] *away.* Exeunt. Ff. *away.* Exeunt: Herm. pursuing Helena. Theob.
* Her. *I am amaz'd, and know not what to ſay.* Qq, Pope, Han. Cap. et seq. (except White i).

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353. **abide**] See line 181, *supra.*

356. **Of thine or mine**] MALONE: If the line had run *Of mine or thine,* I should have suspected that the phrase was borrowed from the Latin: Now follow, to try whose right of *property*—of *meum* or *tuum*—is greatest in Helena. [See *The Tempest,* II, i, 32 of this edition, where is given the following note:] WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 353), in a paragraph on the use of *former,* the comparative, to which *foremost* is the superlative, quotes this passage from Sidney's *Arcadia,* B. i, p. 63: 'the question arising, who should be the former against Phalantus, of the blacke, or the ill-apparelled knight,' &c., '*i. e.*' explains Walker, 'whether the blacke or the, &c. should be the first to wage combat with Phalantus.' Whereupon LETTSOM, Walker's editor, remarks that this example 'shows that the First Folio is right in "Which *of* he, *or* Adrian."'

358. **iowle**] W. A. WRIGHT: Side by side, close together, as the cheek to the jole or jaw.

359. **coyle**] That is, confusion, turmoil. See Shakespeare *passim.*

364.* THEOBALD'S stage-direction 'Exit Hermia pursuing Helena' cannot be right. That this line was accidentally omitted by the printers of F_1 is clear, I think, from the fact that there is no *Exit* or *Exeunt* for the two girls.—R. G. WHITE, in his first edition, justified the omission, but in his second edition inserted the line, without a note. In the first edition it stands: 'The line is so unsuited to Hermia's quickness of temper and tongue, to the state of her mind, and to the situation, and so uncalled for by Helena's speech, which elicits it, that we should gladly accept the testimony of the authentic copy, that it is either the interpolation of some player who did not want to

Enter Oberon and Pucke.

Ob. This is thy negligence, ſtill thou miſtak'ſt,
Or elſe committ'ſt thy knaueries willingly.
Puck. Beleeue me, King of ſhadowes, I miſtooke,
Did not you tell me, I ſhould know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on?
And ſo farre blameleſſe proues my enterpize,
That I haue nointed an Athenians eies,
And ſo farre am I glad, it ſo did ſort,
As this their iangling I eſteeme a ſport.
Ob. Thou ſeeſt theſe Louers ſeeke a place to fight,
Hie therefore *Robin*, ouercaſt the night,
The ſtarrie Welkin couer thou anon,
With drooping fogge as blacke as *Acheron*,

365. [Scene IX. Pope, Han. Scene VIII. Warb. Johns.
Enter...] Om. Qq.
367. *willingly*] *wilfully* Qq, Cap. Mal. Steev.'93, Var. Coll. Sing. Hal. Dyce, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii.
368. */hadowes*] *fairies* Gould.
370. *garments*] *garment* Glo. (misprint).
370. *hath*] *had* Q_2, Theob. et seq.
371. *enterpize*] F_2 (Editor's copy), Vernor & Hood's *Repr.*, Staunton's *Photolith.* *enterprize* Booth's *Repr.*
372. *nointed*] *'nointed* Rowe et seq.
373. */o did*] *did so* Rowe+. *did not* Steev.'85 (misprint).
378. */fogge*] */fogs* Theob. ii, Warb. Johns.

leave the stage without a speech, or a piece of the author's work which he cancelled as unsatisfactory or superfluous.' [See *Preface* to this volume, p. xv.—ED.]

371. **enterpize**] See Text. Notes for a variation in *Reprints* of F_2.—ED.

372. **nointed**] For a list of words whose prefixes are dropped, see ABBOTT, § 460.

373. **sort**] An allusion to fate. 'All the forms of *sort*,' says SKEAT (*Dict.* s. v.), 'are ultimately due to Lat. *sortem*, acc. of *sors*, lot, destiny, chance, condition, state.'—ED.

374. **As**] I am not sure that in a modern text there should not be a semicolon after 'sort' in the previous line, to indicate that this 'As' does not follow the 'so' in that line (unlike the 'so' and 'As' in lines 379, 380), but means *because, since*.—ED.

378. **Acheron**] W. A. WRIGHT: The river of hell in classical mythology, supposed by Shakespeare to be a pit or lake. Compare *Macb.* III, v, 15: 'And at the pit of Acheron Meet me,' &c.; *Tit. And.* IV, iii, 44: 'I'll dive into the burning lake below And pull her out of Acheron by the heels,'—R. G. WHITE (ed. ii): A river in Hades, which Shakespeare mistook to be a pit. [That Shakespeare in *Macbeth* may have supposed Acheron to be a pit is quite likely, but he made no mistake in the present passage. The rivers of hell were black, and it is with this blackness alone that comparison is here made. In Shakespeare's contemporary, Sylvester, there is the same simile: 'In *Groon-land* field is found a dungeon, A thousand-fold more dark than *Acheron*.'—*The Vocation*, line 532, ed. Grosart. And if it be urged that Sylvester has here fallen into the same error, and overlooked the fact that Acheron is a river, so be it. Shakespeare has a good companion, then, to bear half the disgrace of his oversight in *Macbeth*.—ED.]

And lead theſe teſtie Riuals ſo aſtray,
As one come not within anothers way.
Like to *Lyſander*, ſometime frame thy tongue,
Then ſtirre *Demetrius* vp with bitter wrong;
And ſometime raile thou like *Demetrius*;
And from each other looke thou leade them thus,
Till ore their browes, death-counterfeiting, ſleepe
With leaden legs, and Battie-wings doth creepe;
Then cruſh this hearbe into *Lyſanders* eie,
Whoſe liquor hath this vertuous propertie,
To take from thence all error, with his might,
And make his eie-bals role with wonted ſight.
When they next wake, all this deriſion
Shall ſeeme a dreame, and fruitleſſe viſion,
And backe to *Athens* ſhall the Louers wend
With league, whoſe date till death ſhall neuer end.
Whiles I in this affaire do thee imply,
Ile to my Queene, and beg her *Indian* Boy;
And then I will her charmed eie releaſe
From monſters view, and all things ſhall be peace.
Puck. My Fairie Lord, this muſt be done with haſte,
For night-ſwift Dragons cut the Clouds full faſt,

385. *counterfeiting, ſleepe*] *counterfeiting ſleep* Ff.
386. *legs*] *ledgs* Q_2.
Battie] *Batty* Qq.
389. *his might*] *its might* Rowe+.
395. *imply*] *imploy* Q_1F_4. *apply* Q_2.
400. *night-ſwift*] *nights ſwift* Q_1 *night ſwift* Q_2. *nights-ſwft* F_2. *nights-ſwift* F_3F_4. *night's swift* Rowe et seq.

388. **vertuous**] JOHNSON: Salutiferous. So he calls, in *The Tempest*, *poisonous* dew, 'wicked dew.'—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): 'Virtue' was used of old, and is sometimes now used, for *power*, especially in the sense of healing or corrective power; as in the Gospels: 'I perceive some virtue has gone out of me.'—*Luke* viii, 16.

392. **shall seeme a dreame**] GUEST (i, 130) gives other examples from Shakespeare of this effective 'middle-sectional rhyme,' *e. g.* 'He hath won With *fame* a *name* to Caius Martius; these.'—*Cor.* II, i; 'With *cuffs* and *ruffs*, and farthingales and things.'—*Tam. of the Shr.* V, iii; 'Or *groan* for *Joan?* or spend a minute's time.'—*Love's L. L.* IV, iii.

391, 392. **deriſion . . . viſion**] To be pronounced *dissolute*.

395. **imply**] The Q_1 corrects this compositor's error.

400. **night-swift**] This word, instead of *night's-swift*, may be accounted for, if the printers of F_1 composed from dictation.—ED.

400. **Dragons**] STEEVENS: So in *Cymb.* II, ii, 48: 'Swift, swift you dragons of the night.' The task of drawing the chariot of the night was assigned to dragons on account of their supposed watchfulness.—MALONE: This circumstance Shakespeare

And yonder ſhines *Auroras* harbinger;
At whoſe approach Ghoſts wandring here and there,
Troope home to Church-yards; damned ſpirits all,
That in croſſe-waies and flouds haue buriall,
Alreadie to their wormie beds are gone;
For feare leaſt day ſhould looke their ſhames vpon,
They wilfully themſelues dxile from light,
And muſt for aye conſort with blacke browd night.
Ob. But we are ſpirits of another ſort:
I, with the mornings loue haue oft made ſport,

403. *Church-yards*] *church-yard* Theob. ii, Johns.
407. *themſelues dxile*] F_1. *exile themselves* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
408. *black browd*] *black browed* Q_2. *biack-browd* F_3F_4.
410. *mornings loue*] *morning loue* Ff. *Morning-Love* Rowe i. *Morning-Light* Rowe ii+. *morning's love* Cap. et seq.

might have learned from a passage in Golding's *Ovid*, which he has imitated in *The Tempest*: 'And brought asleep the dragon fell, whose eyes were never shet.'—W. A. WRIGHT: Milton perhaps had this passage in his mind when he wrote *Il Penseroso*, 59: 'While Cynthia checks her dragon-yoke Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.' On which Keightley remarks it is wrong mythology, 'for Demeter, or Ceres, alone had a dragon yoke.' Drayton also (*The Man in the Moon*, 431) says that Phœbe 'Calls downe the Dragons that her chariot drawe.'

401. **harbinger**] I suppose this must have had two accents, on the first and on the last syllable, and the latter pronounced to rhyme with 'there.'—ED.

404. **crosse-waies and flouds**] STEEVENS: The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads; and of those, who being drowned, were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies. That the waters were sometimes the place of residence for 'damned spirits' we learn from the ancient bl. l. romance of *Syr Eglamoure of Artoys*, no date: 'Let some preest a gospel saye, For doute of fendes in the flode.'

405. **wormie**] STEEVENS: This has been borrowed by Milton in his *On the death of a Fair Infant*: 'Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed.'

406. **vpon**] For other examples of the transposition of prepositions, see ABBOTT, § 203; and for examples of an accent nearer to the end than with us, like 'exile,' in the next line, see *Ib.* § 490.

407. **dxile**] THIRLBY (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 224): I read *exiled*, and incline to think Oberon's speech should begin here.

408. **black-browd**] STEEVENS: So in *King John*, V, vi, 17: 'here walk I in the black brow of night To find you out.'

410. **mornings loue**] There has been some difficulty in determining the reference here.—CAPELL suggests that it may mean 'the star Phosphorus; possibly the sun; and the sense be that the speaker had sported with one or other of these, *i. e.* wanton'd in them; but the simpler sense is that he had courted the morning, made her his love-addresses; the lady's name is Aurora.'—STEEVENS takes it for granted

And like a Forreſter, the groues may tread,
Euen till the Eaſterne gate all fierie red,
Opening on *Neptune*, with faire bleſſed beames,
Turnes into yellow gold, his ſalt greene ſtreames.
But notwithſtanding haſte, make no delay:
We may effect this buſineſſe, yet ere day.
Puck. Vp and downe, vp and downe, I will leade them vp and downe: I am fear'd in field and towne.
Goblin, lead them vp and downe: here comes one.

413. *faire bleſſed*] *far-blessing* Han. Warb. *fair-blessed* Walker, Dyce ii.
415. *notwithſtanding*] *notwiſtanding*, Q$_1$. *notwithstanding*, Theob. et seq.
416. [Exit Oberon. Rowe.
417–419. *Vp...downe*] Two lines, Q$_1$. Four lines, Pope et seq.
417. *downe, vp*] *down then, up* Han.

that it is Tithonus, the husband of Aurora.—HOLT WHITE thinks, and DYCE and W. A. WRIGHT agree with him, that 'Cephalus, the mighty hunter and paramour of Aurora, is intended. The context, "And like a forester," &c. seems to show that the chase was the "sport" which Oberon boasts he partook with the "morning's love."' —HALLIWELL says that 'Oberon merely means to say metaphorically that he has sported with Aurora, the morning's love, the first blush of morning; and that he is not, like a ghost, compelled to vanish at the dawn of day.' [This interpretation is to me the most natural, and more in harmony than the others with the drift of Oberon's speech, which is to contrast with the fate of the damned spirits, who must consort with black-browed night, his liberty in the fair blessed beams of day, and not to boast that he is privileged to sport with Phosphorus, or Tithonus, or Cephalus.—ED.]

413. **beames,**] I believe that DYCE (ed. ii) and HUDSON, who printed from him, are the only editors who have here followed WALKER's convincing suggestion (*Crit.* iii, 49) that the comma after 'beams' be erased. It is with these beams that the streams are turned to gold. Compare 'gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy' —*Sonn.* 33.—ED.

414. **salt greene**] TATHWELL (ap. Grey, i, 62): Qu. *sea*-green. But perhaps the contrast is intended between 'yellow gold' and 'salt green.' [Undoubtedly 'salt green' is *sea green*.—ED.]

415. **notwithstanding**] In this word occurs one of those insignificant variants in different copies of the same edition. The CAM. ED. records as in Q$_1$ (Fisher's) *notwistandiug*, and the same is recorded in HENRY JOHNSON'S microscopically minute collation, whereas Ashbee's Facsimile and Griggs's Photo-lithographic Facsimile both have *notwistanding*. But this minute collation of what is not Shakespeare's work, but that of a printer, in whom we take no atom of interest, leads, I am afraid, nowhither.—ED.

417. **Vp and downe,** &c.] COLLIER: These four lines [according to Pope's division] are possibly a quotation from some lost ballad respecting Puck and his pranks; he would otherwise hardly address himself as 'Goblin.' The exit of Oberon is not marked in the old copies, and the last line [419] might belong to him, if we suppose him to have remained on the stage.

419. **Goblin, lead**] THIRLBY (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 224) conjectured *Goblin'll lead* —an *emendatio certissima*, I think; a clear case of absorption. STAUNTON, however,

Enter Lyſander. 420

Lyſ. Where art thou, proud *Demetrius*?
Speake thou now.

Rob. Here villaine, drawne & readie. Where art thou?

Lyſ. I will be with thee ſtraight.

Rob. Follow me then to plainer ground. 425

Enter Demetrius.

Dem. *Lyſander*, ſpeake againe;
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speake in ſome buſh: Where doſt thou hide thy head? 429

420. Enter] Re-enter Cap.
421, 422. One line, Qq, Pope et seq.
423, 425, &c. Rob.] Puck. Rowe et seq.
425. *to plainer ground*] Separate line, Theob. et seq. (except Hal).
[Lys. goes out, as following Dem. Theob. Exit Lys. as following the Voice, which seems to go off. Cap.
429. *Speake in ſome buſh:*] *Speak. In some bush?* Cap. et seq. (subs.).
Speake...head?] *Speak in some bush, where thou dost hide thy head.* Han.

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in a note on 'Sicilia is a so-forth' (*Wint. T.* I, ii, 218, contributed to *The Athenæum*, 27 June, '74), gives a strikingly novel interpretation of the whole line. It is not a happy interpretation, it must be confessed, but it has a sad interest as being one of the very last notes which sprang from that fertile and learned mind, and one which, alas, its writer never saw in print. It is as follows: 'There can be no doubt with those well read in our old drama that *et cetera* in like manner, from being used to express vaguely what a writer or speaker hesitated to call by its plain name, came at length to signify the object itself. "Yea, forsooth" is possibly another case in point. The Puritanical citizens, who were afraid of a good air-splitting oath, and indulged only in mealy-mouthed protestations, got the name of "yea-forsooths" [see *2 Hen. IV.*: I, ii, 41]. I am not sure but that in the same way we get the meaning of [the present line, which is], perhaps, no other than a nickname given to the mischievous sprite to indicate his will-o'-the-wisp propensities, and to be read: "*Goblin-lead-them-up-and-down.*" Still more curious, there is some reason for believing that what has always been regarded as a harmless exclamation of Master Flute: "A paramour is, *God bless us*, a thing of nought," was really meant as a term of reproach. Compare V, i, 323: "He for a man, *God warrant us*; she for a woman, *God bless us*," expressions which have hitherto defied explanation, but which are quite intelligible as terms of opprobrium. The one being a male *God-warrant-us*; the other a female *God-bless-us*. The rationale of these latter expressions being so employed must be gathered, I apprehend, from the all-prevalent fear of witchcraft formerly. When a suspected person came in presence, or was even spoken of, it was customary to invoke the protection of Heaven, and the usual form of invocation was "God bless us!" In the course of time this formula was used to denominate the individual whose malice was deprecated, and finally became a by-name for any one of ill-omened repute.' It is only Staunton's interpretation of the present line that is to be deprecated in the foregoing note.—ED.

423. **drawne**] That is, with sword drawn.

429. **Speake . . . bush**] CAPELL: Very nature and knowledge of what is acting

Rob. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the ſtars,
Telling the buſhes that thou look'ſt for wars,
And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,
Ile whip thee with a rod. He is defil'd
That drawes a ſword on thee.
Dem. Yea, art thou there?
Ro. Follow my voice, we'l try no manhood here. *Exit.*
Lyſ. He goes before me, and ſtill dares me on,
When I come where he cals, then he's gone:
The villaine is much lighter heel'd then I:
I followed faſt, but faſter he did flye; *ſhifting places.*
That fallen am I in darke vneuen way,
And here wil reſt me. Come thou gentle day: *lye down.*
For if but once thou ſhew me thy gray light,

430. *bragging*] *begging* F_3F_4, Rowe.
436. Exit.] Exeunt. Qq.
437. [Lys. comes back. Theob. Re-enter Lys. Cap.
438. *cals,*] *cals me*, Ff, Rowe+.
438. *he's*] *he is* Q_1.
440. *followed*] *follow'd* Rowe et seq.
ſhifting places.] Om. Qq.
442. lye down.] Om. Qq. Lyes down. Rowe.

will tell us, the line is spoke with great pauses; its sense this, indicated by the tone, *Speak.* Are you crept into *some bush?*

440. **shifting places**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): This stage-direction is misplaced, as it plainly refers to Puck, Lysander, and Demetrius, and belongs several lines above. [R. G. White is the only editor, I believe, who has done more than merely mention that this puzzling stage-direction is to be found in the Folio; his suggestion is not altogether satisfactory. Just below Demetrius accuses Lysander of 'shifting every place,' which certainly seems to refer to this stage-direction, and may indicate some unusual alacrity on the part of Lysander in his attempts in the dense darkness to find Demetrius. It is clear that Demetrius follows Puck's voice off the stage at line 436. To make Demetrius enter and fall asleep and then Lysander enter and fall asleep, would have smacked of tameness in the repetition, and we should have had but little proof that the two men were really in bitter earnest. Whereas if Demetrius plunges into the darkness and we lose sight of him mad in the pursuit of Puck's voice, and then see Lysander enter, rush hither and thither, half frenzied, shifting his place every minute, then the conviction is forced on us that this is a fight to the death, and the somnolent power of Puck's charm in allaying the fury is heightened. There is another point which adds somewhat to the belief that this stage-direction is correctly placed: it is not mandatory, as are many other stage-directions in this play, or as that two lines lower, 'lye down'; it does not tell the actor what to do, but describes what he does. Hence I adhere to the Folio, both as to the propriety of this 'shifting places' and as to its location.—ED.]

443. **gray**] MARSHALL: Compare *Ham.* I, i, 166, 'But look, the morn, in *ruſſet* mantle clad,' where 'ruſſet,' as has been pointed out in line [23 of this scene], means *grey.*

Ile finde *Demetrius*, and reuenge this ſpight.
Enter Robin and Demetrius.
Rob. Ho, ho, ho; coward, why com'ſt thou not?
Dem. Abide me, if thou dar'ſt. For well I wot,
Thou runſt before me, ſhifting euery place,

444. [sleeps. Cap.
445. Enter Robin] Robin Qq.
446. *Ho, ho, ho;*] *Ho, ho; ho, ho!* Cap. Steev.'93, Var. Knt, Dyce ii, iii, Ktly.
446. *why com'ſt*] *why then com'st* Han. *why comest* Johns. Steev.'85, Rann, Mal. *wherefore comest* Schmidt.

446. **Ho, ho, ho**] RITSON: This exclamation would have been uttered by Puck with greater propriety if he were not now playing an assumed character, which he, in the present instance, seems to forget. In the old song, printed by Peck and Percy [see 'Robin Goodfellow,' Percy's *Reliques*, &c. in Appendix], in which all his gambols are related, he concludes every stanza with *Ho, ho, ho!* So in *Grim the Collier of Croydon* [Robin Goodfellow says], 'Ho, ho, ho, my masters! No good fellowship!' [V, i, p. 459, Hazlitt's *Dodsley*]. Again, in Drayton's *Nymphidia* [p. 164, ed. 1748], 'Hoh, hoh, quoth Hob, God save thy grace.' It was not, however, as has been asserted, the appropriate exclamation, in our author's time, of this eccentric character; the devil himself having, if not a better, at least an older, title to it. So in *Histriomastix* (as quoted by Mr Steevens in a note on *Rich. III*), 'a *roaring Devil* enters, with the *Vice* on his back, *Iniquity* in one hand, and *Iuventus* in the other, crying, "Ho! ho! ho! these babes mine are all."'—[p. 40, ed. Simpson]. Again, in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, 'But Diccon, Diccon, did not the devil cry ho, ho, ho?' [II, iii]. And, in the same play, 'By the mass, ich saw him of late cal up a great blacke devill, O, the knave cryed, ho, ho, he roared and he thundered' [III, ii]. So in the Epitaph attributed to Shakespeare: 'Hoh! quoth the devil, 'tis my John o' Coombe.' Again, in Goulart's *Histories*, 1607: 'the *Diuills* in horrible formes . . . assoone as they beheld him ran unto him, crying *Hoh, Hoh*, what makest thou here?' Again, in the same book, 'The *blacke guests* . . . roared and cryed out, *Hoh*, sirra, let alone the child.' Indeed, from a passage in *Wily Beguiled*, 1606, I suspect that this same 'knavish sprite' was sometimes introduced on the stage as a demi-devil: 'I'll rather,' it is Robin Goodfellow who speaks, 'put on my flashing red nose and my flaming face, and come wrap'd in a calf's skin, and cry ho, ho.'—[p. 319, ed. Hawkins, and p. 256, ed. Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, in both places it is printed *bo, bo*.—ED.].—STAUNTON: There is an ancient Norfolk proverb, 'To laugh like Robin Goodfellow,' which means, we presume, to laugh in mockery or scorn. This derision was always expressed by the exclamation in the text, . . . which seems with our ancestors always to have conveyed the idea of something fiendish and unnatural, and is the established burden to the songs which describe the frolics of Robin Goodfellow.—W. A. WRIGHT: There is nothing so exceptional in the cry as to make it inappropriate [as Ritson suggested] to Puck in an assumed character.—BELL (ii, 121), whose 'humour' was Teutonic folk-lore, connects by this exclamation, Puck with *The Wild Huntsman*.

447. **Abide**] W. A. WRIGHT: Wait for me, that we may encounter. [It is possible that 'me' may be merely the ethical dative, and thus 'abide' may be relieved from any unusual meaning, and the phrase be equivalent merely to 'Stand still.'—ED.]

And dar'ſt not ſtand, nor looke me in the face.
Where art thou?
Rob. Come hither, I am here.
Dem. Nay then thou mock'ſt me; thou ſhalt buy this deere,
If euer I thy face by day-light ſee.
Now goe thy way: faintneſſe conſtraineth me,
To meaſure out my length on this cold bed,
By daies approach looke to be viſited.

Enter Helena.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy houres, ſhine comforts from the Eaſt,
That I may backe to *Athens* by day-light,
From theſe that my poore companie deteſt;
And ſleepe that ſometime ſhuts vp ſorrowes eie,

450. *thou?*] *thou now?* Q_1, Cap. Coll. Sing. Hal. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. Ktly.
451. *Come*] *Come thou* Pope+.
452. *ſhalt*] *ſhat* Q_1.
buy] *'by* Johns. conj. Coll. Sing. Dyce, Sta.
455. *faintneſſe*] *faitnneſſe* F_3.
457. [Lyes down. Rowe.
[Scene X. Pope, Han. Warb. Scene IX. Johns.
458. Enter...] Enter... and throws herself down. Cap.
460. *ſhine comforts*] *ſhine comforts*, Q_1. *shine, comforts*, Theob. Warb. Johns. Cap. Mal. Steev.'93, Knt, White i, Sta.
463. *ſometime*] *ſometimes* QqF_3F_4, Rowe+, Knt, Coll. i, ii, Sing. Cam. Ktly, White ii.

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452. buy] JOHNSON: That is, thou shalt dearly pay for this. Though this is sense and may well enough stand, yet the poet perhaps wrote 'thou shalt 'by it dear.' —STAUNTON: There can be little doubt the true word was *'by*.—W. A. WRIGHT: The phrase ['buy it dear'], if a corruption, was so well established in Shakespeare's time as to make a change unnecessary. Compare *1 Hen. IV:* V, iii, 7: 'The Lord of Stafford dear to-day hath bought Thy likeness.' And *2 Hen. VI:* II, i, 100: 'Too true; and bought his climbing very dear.' Besides, the two words were etymologically connected. [See line 181, above.]

460. comforts] This may be an accusative, the object of 'shine'; it may be a vocative, like 'night'; or it may be a nominative, with 'shine' as its verb; whichever the reader may think the most pathetic.—ED.

462. detest] WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 311): In writers of [Shakespeare's] age *detest* is used in the sense which as then it still retained from its original *detestari*, being indicative of something spoken, not of an affection of the mind; compare *attest, protest*, which still retain their etymological meaning. Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, B. ii, speaking of secrecy in matters of government, 'Again, the wisdom of antiquity . . . in the description of torments and pains . . . doth detest the offence of facility.' Thus, *Ant. and Cleop.* IV, xiv, 55, 'Since Cleopatra died I've liv'd in such dishonour, that the gods Detest my baseness.' [Walker gives several other examples, besides the present passage, which justify his observation.—ED.]

Steale me a while from mine owne companie. *Sleepe.*
Rob. Yet but three *?* Come one more,
Two of both kindes makes vp foure.
Here ſhe comes, curſt and ſad,
Cupid is a knauiſh lad,
Enter Hermia.
Thus to make poore females mad.
Her. Neuer ſo wearie, neuer ſo in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torne with briars,
I can no further crawle, no further goe;
My legs can keepe no pace with my deſires.
Here will I reſt me till the breake of day,
Heauens ſhield *Lyſander*, if they meane a fray.
Rob. On the ground ſleepe ſound,
Ile apply your eie gentle louer, remedy.

465. *three ?*] *three here ?* Han.
466. *makes*] *make* F_3, Pope+, Coll. Hal. White i.
467. *comes*] *cometh* Han.
469. Enter Hermia.] Om. Q_1. After line 470, Rowe et seq.
473. *further*] *farther* Coll. White i.
475. [lies down. Cap.
476. *Heauens*] *Heaven* Anon. (ap. Cam.).
476. [Lyes down. Rowe.
477–480. Six lines, Coll. Sing. Ktly. Ten lines, Warb. et cet.
477. *ſleepe*] *sleep thou* Han. Cap.
478. *your*] QqFf, Hal. *to your* Rowe et cet.
[squeezing the Juice on Lysander's eye. Rowe.

465–470. VERITY: A trochaic measure of three feet with extra syllable at the end. Scan 'three' as a disyllable; likewise 'comes,' thus: 'Yĕt but | *thrĕe ?* | Cŏme one | mŏre,' and 'Hĕre she | *cŏmes* | cŭrst and | sad.' [Why not say that these two lines are made up of amphimacers, and so avoid any barbarous prolongation of syllables? Thus: 'Yĕt bŭt thrēe | Cōme ŏne mōre,' and 'Hēre shĕ cōmes. | Cūrst ănd sād.' Or even why give technical terms, which are merely to guide us when in doubt, to lines which no English tongue can possibly pronounce other than rhythmically?—ED.]

466. makes] See III, i, 84.

477, 478. On . . . eie] TATHWELL (ap. Grey, i, 63) would read as two lines; 'because verses with the middle rhyme, which were called *leonine* or *monkish* verses, seem to have been the ancient language of *charms* and incantations.'

477–480. On . . . eye] GUEST (i, 185): A section of two accents is rarely met with as an independent verse. The cause was evidently its shortness. Shakespeare, however, has adopted it into that peculiar rhythm in which are expressed the wants and wishes of his *fairy-land*. Under Shakespeare's sanction it has become classical, and must now be considered as the *fairy-dialect* of English literature.

478. your eie] HALLIWELL, who alone of all editors follows the QqFf here in the omission of the preposition *to*, asserts that '"apply" did not necessarily require the addition of the preposition. The verb occurs without it in *The Nice Wanton*, 1560. The versification is irregular.' The versification is irregular only when we

When thou wak'ſt, thou tak'ſt
True delight in the ſight of thy former Ladies eye,
And the Country Prouerb knowne,
That euery man ſhould take his owne.
In your waking ſhall be ſhowne.
Iacke ſhall haue *Iill*, nought ſhall goe ill,
The man ſhall haue his Mare againe, and all ſhall bee well.

They ſleepe all the Act.

479. *wak'ſt, thou tak'ſt*] *wakest next, thou takest* Han. *wak'st Next, thou tak'st* Cap. *wak'st See thou tak'st* Tyrwhitt, Coll. ii (MS).
tak'ſt] *rak'ſt* F_2F_3.
484. Two lines, Johns. et seq.
485. *Mare*] *mate* Gould.
485, 486. *and...well.*] Separate line, Coll. Sing. White i, Ktly.
485. *all ſhall bee*] *all be* Rowe+.
486. *well*] *still* Steev. conj.
487. They...] Om. Qq. They sleep. Rowe.

count the syllables on our fingers; a solitary example, and that too, not quoted in full, is hardly sufficient to make a rule, especially in days of careless printing.—ED.

479. **thou tak'st**] TYRWHITT: The line would be improved, I think, both in its measure and construction, if it were written '*see* thou tak'st.'—DYCE: But *see* would require *take*. Compare above, 'sleep sound.'—GUEST (i, 292): The propriety of the rhythm will be better understood if we suppose (what was certainly intended) that the fairy is pouring the love-juice on the sleeper's eye while he pronounces the words 'thou tak'st.' The words form, indeed, the fairy's 'charm,' and the rhythm is grave and emphatic as their import. I cannot see how the construction is bettered [by Tyrwhitt's emendation], and the correspondence, no less than the fitness of the numbers, is entirely lost.

484. **Iacke . . . Iill**] STEEVENS: This is to be found in Heywood's *Epigrammes upon Proverbes*, 1567: 'All shalbe well, Iacke shall haue Gill: Nay, nay, Gill is wedded to Wyll.'—GREY: Jill seems to be a nickname for Julia or Julianna.—HALLIWELL: The nicknames of Jack and Jill, as generic titles for a man and woman, are of great antiquity.—STAUNTON cites instances of this phrase from Skelton's *Magnyfycence*, Dyce's ed. i, 234; from Heywood's *Dialogue*, 1598, sig. F 3; *Love's Lab. L.* V, ii, 305.

485, 486. **The . . . well**] W. A. WRIGHT: This seems to have been a proverbial expression, implying that all would be right in the end. Compare Fletcher, *The Chances*, III, iv: '*Fred.* How now? How goes it? *John.* Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well, Frederic.'

487. Another descriptive stage-direction, if such an expression be allowable, like 'shifting places,' above.—ED.

Actus Quartus. [*Scene I.*]

Enter Queene of Fairies, and Clowne, and Fairies, and the King behinde them.

Tita. Come, ſit thee downe vpon this flowry bed,
While I thy amiable cheekes doe coy,
And ſticke muske roſes in thy ſleeke ſmoothe head,
And kiſſe thy faire large eares, my gentle ioy.
Clow. Where's *Peaſe bloſſome?*
Peaſ. Ready.
Clow. Scratch my head, *Peaſe-bloſſome.* Wher's Mounſieuer *Cobweb.*
Cob. Ready.
Clowne. Mounſieur *Cobweb*, good Mounſier get your

1. Actus Quartus.] Om. Qq. Act IV, Scene i. Rowe et seq. Act IV, Sc. ii. Fleay.
[The Wood. Pope. The same. The Lovers at a distance asleep. Cap.
2. and Clowne,] Bottom, Rowe et seq. Fairies,] Faieries: Q_2.
2, 3. the King...] Oberon, behind, unseen. Cap.
4. [seating him on a bank. Cap.
6. *ſleeke ſmoothe*] *sleek-smooth'd* Pope, Han. *sleek, smooth'd* Theob. Warb. Johns.
8, 10, &c. Clow.] Bot. Rowe.
10. *Mounſieuer*] *Mounſieur* QqFf, Cap. White, Cam. Rolfe (throughout). *Monsieur* Rowe et cet. (throughout).
13. *get your*] *get you your* Q_2, Sta. Cam. White ii.

1. **Actus Quartus**] JOHNSON: I see no reason why the Fourth Act should begin here, when there seems no interruption of the action. The division of acts seems to have been arbitrarily made in F_1, and may therefore be altered at pleasure. [It is precisely because there is so little 'interruption of the action' that it is necessary to have an interruption of time, which this division supplies. At the close of the last scene the stage is pitch-dark, doubly black through Puck's charms, and a change to daylight is rendered less violent by a new Act. See *Preface*, p. xxxi.—ED.]

2, 8, 10, &c. **Clowne**] See FLEAY, V, i, 417.

5. **amiable**] W. A. WRIGHT: That is, lovely. Compare *Psalm* lxxxiv, 1: 'How amiable are thy tabernacles.' And Milton, *Par. Lost*, iv, 250: 'Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind, Hung amiable.'

5. **coy**] STEEVENS: That is, to soothe, caress. So in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, vi, 30 [p. 148]: 'And whilst she coyes his sooty cheekes, or curles his sweaty top.' Again, in Golding's *Ovid*, vii [p. 82, ed. 1567]: 'Their dangling Dewlaps with his hand he coyd vnfearfully.'—W. A. WRIGHT: The verb is formed from the adjective, which is itself derived from the French *coy* or *quoy*, the representative of the Lat. *quietus*.

13. **Mounsieur**] CAMBRIDGE EDITORS: We have retained throughout this scene

weapons in your hand, & kill me a red hipt humble-Bee, on the top of a thiſtle ; and good Mounſieur bring mee the hony bag. Doe not fret your ſelfe too much in the action, Mounſieur; and good Mounſieur haue a care the hony bag breake not, I would be loth to haue yon ouer-flowne with a hony-bag ſigniour. Where's Mounſieur *Muſtardſeed*?

Muſ. Ready.

Clo. Giue me your neafe, Mounſieur *Muſtardſeed.* Pray you leaue your courteſie good Mounſieur.

Muſ. What's your will?

Clo. Nothing good Mounſieur, but to help Caualery *Cobweb* to ſcratch. I muſt to the Barbers Mounſieur, for me-thinkes I am maruellous hairy about the face. And I

18. *would*] *should* Pope ii, Theob. Warb. Johns.
loth] *loath* Q_1.
yon] F_1.
ouerflowne] *overflowed* Mal.'90 conj.
22, 23. Prose, Q_1, Pope et seq.
22. *your neafe*] *thy neafe* Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. *thy neife* Johns.
neafe] *newfe* F_2, Rowe ii. *newfe* F_3. *news* F_4, Rowe i.
22. *Muſtardſeed*] *Muſtard* F_3F_4, Rowe i.
23. *courteſie*] *curtſie* Q_1. *curteſie* F_3F_4.
25. *Caualery*] Qq, Coll. Hal. Dyce, White, Cam. Ktly. *Cavalero* Ff, Rowe et cet.
26. Cobweb] *Pease-blossom* Rann, Hal. Dyce ii, iii.
27. *maruellous*] *maruailes* Q_1. *maruailous* Q_2. *marvels* Cap.

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the spelling of the old copies, as representing a pronunciation more appropriate to Bottom, like 'Cavalery,' a few lines lower down. We are aware, however, that the word was generally so spelt.—ROLFE: It should be noted, however, that 'Monsieur,' 'Mounsieur,' 'Mounsier,' &c. are forms quite promiscuously used by the printers of that time. [Any indication whatever which tends to differentiate Bottom's pronunciation from Theseus's should be by all means retained.—ED.]

22. **neafe**] GREY: That is, fist. So in *2 Hen. IV:* II, iv, 200: 'Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif.' [See Text. Notes for its evolution into *news*.—ED.]

23. **courtesie**] SCHMIDT: That is, put on your hat. Compare *Love's Lab. L.* V, i, 103: 'remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head.'

26. **Cobweb**] ANON. (ap. Grey, i, 64): Without doubt it should be Cavalero Pease-blossom; as for Cavalero Cobweb, he had been just dispatched upon a perilous adventure.—CAPELL: Unless you will solve it this way, that Cobweb laughs and goes out, but joins the other in scratching; and this, indeed, is the likeliest, for Pease-blossom would stand but sorrily there.—HUDSON: Bottom is here in a strange predicament, and has not had time to perfect himself in the nomenclature of his fairy attendants, and so he gets the names somewhat mixed. Probably he is here addressing Cavalery Pease-blossom, but gives him the wrong name.

27. **marvellous**] See III, i, 4.

am ſuch a tender Aſſe, if my haire do but tickle me, I muſt ſcratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou heare ſome muſicke, my ſweet loue.

Clow. I haue a reaſonable good eare in muſicke. Let vs haue the tongs and the bones.

Muſicke Tongs, Rurall Muſicke.

Tita. Or ſay ſweete Loue, what thou deſireſt to eat.

Clowne. Truly a pecke of Prouender; I could munch your good dry Oates. Me-thinkes I haue a great deſire to a bottle of hay : good hay, ſweete hay hath no fellow.

28. *do but*] *doth but* Rowe ii+.
30. *ſome*] *ſome ſome* Q_2.
32, 33. *Let vs*] *Let's* Q_2.
33. *tongs*] *tongues* F_2. *tonges* F_3.
34. Muſicke...] Ff. Music. Tongs, ... Pope+. Rustic music. White i. Rough music. Dyce ii, Om. Qq et cet.
35. *deſireſt*] *desir'st* Rowe et seq. (except Cam.).
36. *Prouender*] *prouander* Q_2.
could] *would* F_3F_4, Rowe i.
munch] *mounch* Q_2.
38. *ſweete hay*] *sweet hay*, Cap. et seq. (except Dyce ii).

33. **tongs . . . bones**] COLLIER: Such music seems to have been played out of sight, at this desire from Bottom.—PLANCHÉ (ap. Halliwell): In the original sketches of Inigo Jones, preserved in the library of the Duke of Devonshire, are two figures illustrative of the rural music here alluded to. 'Knackers' is written by Inigo Jones under the first figure, and 'Tonges and Key' under the second; the 'knackers' were usually made of bone or hard wood, and were played between the fingers, in the same way as we still hear them every day among boys in the streets, and it is a very ancient and popular kind of music; the 'tongs' were struck by the 'key,' and in this way the discordant sounds were produced that were so grateful to the ear of the entranced Weaver.—STAUNTON: These instruments [mentioned by Planché] must be regarded as the immediate precursors of the more musical marrow-bones and cleavers, the introduction of which may, with great probability, be referred to the establishment of Clare Market, in the middle of the seventeenth century; since the butchers of that place were particularly celebrated for their performances. In Addison's description of John Dentry's remarkable 'kitchen music' (*Spectator*, No. 570, 1714), the marrow-bones and cleavers form no part of the Captain's harmonious apparatus, but the tongs and key are represented to have become a little unfashionable some years before. By the year 1749, however, the former had obtained a considerable degree of vulgar popularity, and were introduced in Bonnell Thornton's burlesque 'Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, adapted to the Ancient British Musick.' Ten years afterwards this poem was recomposed by Dr Burney, and performed at Ranelagh, on which occasion cleavers were cast in bell-metal to accompany the verses wherein they are mentioned.

34. **Musicke**, &c.] CAPELL: This scenical direction is certainly an interpolation of the players, as no such direction appears in either Qto, and Titania's reply is a clear exclusion of it. [See Collier's suggestion noted above.]

38. **bottle**] HALLIWELL: A 'bottle of hay' was not a mere *bundle*, but some

Tita. I haue a venturous Fairy, 40
That ſhall ſeeke the Squirrels hoard,
And fetch thee new Nuts. 42

40, 41. One line, Q_1.
40, 42. Prose, Pope, Theob. Two lines, ending *ſeeke...nuts*, Han. et seq.
40. *venturous*] *vent'rous* Cap.
41. *Squirrels*] *Squirils* Q_1.
42. *thee*] *thee thence* Han. Warb. Cap. Rann, Dyce ii. iii.
new] *newest* Kinnear.

measure of that provender; by it, is now understood such a moderate bundle as may serve for one feed, twisted somewhat into the shape of a bottle, but in earlier times the bottles were of stated weights. In a court-book, dated 1551, the half-penny bottle of hay is stated to weigh two pounds and a half, and the penny bottle five pounds. Cotgrave has 'Boteler, to botle or bundle up, to make into botles or bundles.' To look for a needle in a bottle of hay is a common proverb, which occurs in Taylor's *Workes*, 1630, &c.

38. **bottle of hay**] HUNTER (i, 296): We have here an instance how imperfectly any printing can convey with fulness and precision all that a dramatist has written to be spoken on the stage. Bottom, half man, half ass, is for a bottle of *a; hay*, or *ale*, for the actor was no doubt to speak in such a manner that both these words should be suggested. The snatch of an old song that follows is in praise of *ale*, not 'hay.' Bottom sings, stirred to it by the rural music, the *rough music*, as it is called, which we learn from the Folio was introduced when Bottom had said 'Let us have the tongs and the bones!' [It is to be feared that this a little too fine-spun. First, it is extremely difficult to know when the dropping of the aspirate began to be the shibboleth of society; and secondly, I can find no trace of any song such as Hunter thinks that Bottom quotes; 'sweet' seems scarcely a fit adjective for ale. That Bottom talks with the rudest intonation of the clowns of the day is likely.—ED.]

38. **good hay**, &c.] COLLIER: This is consistent with the notion that Bottom really partakes of the nature of the ass; not so his declaration,—I must to the barber's, &c. He confuses his two conditions.—HALLIWELL: Bottom's desire for hay is, of course, involuntary, and has no connexion with any knowledge of his condition. It may be here remarked that it requires a close examination to enable us to reconcile the discourse of Bottom, in the present scene, with the conclusions that have been generally drawn from his language in the earlier part of the drama. Here he is a clever humourist, and although, as throughout the play, exhibiting a consciousness of superiority, yet he is without his former absurdities. Is it quite certain that his wrongly-applied phrases in I, ii are not intended to proceed from his whimsical humour? [See Puck's and Philostrate's description of Bottom and his fellows.—ED.]

40–42. As Titania always speaks rhythmically, these lines have proved obstinate in all endeavors to reduce them to rhythm. The division into two lines, the first ending 'seeke,' was made by Hanmer, and he has been universally followed. I think it not unlikely that some word has here been lost; experience has taught me that towards the foot of a column, where these present lines happen to be in the Folio, the compositors, for typographical reasons, were apt to lengthen or shorten lines, regardless of rhythm, and in this process phrases became sophisticated. Hanmer divided the lines rightly, and I think that he was equally fortunate in supplying the word that had been probably omitted: 'The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee *thence* new nuts.' COLLIER supposed that *for* is the omitted word: 'and fetch *for* thee

Clown. I had rather haue a handfull or two of dried peaſe. But I pray you let none of your people ſtirre me, I haue an expoſition of ſleepe come vpon me.

Tyta. Sleepe thou, and I will winde thee in my arms,
Fairies be gone, and be alwaies away.
So doth the woodbine, the ſweet Honiſuckle,
Gently entwiſt; the female Iuy ſo
Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme.

43. *or two*] Om. Rowe i.
46. transposed to follow 47, Lettsom (ap. Dyce), Huds.
47. *alwaies*] Qq. *alwayes* F_2F_3. *always* F_4, Rowe, Pope. *a while* Han. White, Coll. ii, iii (MS), Huds. *all ways* Theob. et cet.
49. *entwiſt; the female*] *entwist the Maple* Warb. Theob.
49, 50. *entwiſt;...Enrings*] *entwist,... Enring*, Han. Cap.

new nuts.' But to me the similarity between 'thee' and *thence* is the more likely source of the omission. WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 257) suggests that there has been an absorption of the definite article, the full text being 'fetch thee *the* new nuts.' But this is harsh to my ears. BULLOCH (p. 63) supposes that we have here only three-fourths of a stanza; he therefore supplies a rhyme to 'fairy' and a rhyme to 'hoard,' thus: 'And fetch the new nuts *wary To furnish forth thy board.*'—ABBOTT, § 484, says that either 'and' must be accented and 'hoard' prolonged, as Steevens asserted, or we must scan as follows: 'The squir | rel's hôard, | and fêtch | thee *nèw* | ' nûts.' I doubt if Titania's meaning demands such an emphasis on 'new,' and the prolongation of the word so as to supply the missing rhythm, which is what Abbott intends, gives a sound perilously similar to the characteristic cry of a cat. —ED.

46, 47. **Sleepe thou**, &c.] Dyce records a suggestion of Lettsom that these two lines should be transposed, which seems to me a needless change. Titania's 'Sleep thou' follows naturally after Bottom's wish, and line 47 might very well be printed in a parenthesis.—ED.

47. **alwaies**] THEOBALD, to whom we owe so much, here rightly divided this word into *all ways*, i. e. as he says, 'disperse yourselves, that danger approach us from no quarter.'—UPTON (241): 'Read "and be *away.—Away.*" [Seeing them loiter.']—HEATH (55): As the fairies here spoken to are evidently those whom the Queen had appointed to attend peculiarly on her paramour, I am inclined to think the true reading may be 'and be *always i' th' way*,' i. e. be still ready at a call.

48, 49. **woodbine, ... Gently entwist**] WARBURTON: What does the 'woodbine' entwist? The honeysuckle. But the woodbine and honeysuckle were, till now, but two names for one and the same plant. Florio interprets *Madre selva* by 'woodbinde or honniesuckle.' We must therefore find a support for the *woodbine* as well as for the *ivy*. Which is done by reading [line 49], 'Gently entwist the *Maple;* Ivy so,' &c. The corruption might happen by the first blunderer dropping the *p* in writing *maple*, which word thence became *male*. A following transcriber thought fit to change this *male* into *female*, and then tacked it as an epithet to Ivy.—UPTON (242): Read *wood rine*, i. e. the honey-suckle entwists the rind or bark of the trees:

[48, 49. woodbine, . . . entwist]

So doth the *wood rine* the sweet honey-suckle gently entwist.—JOHNSON: Shakespeare perhaps only meant, so the leaves involve the flower, using 'woodbine' for the plant, and 'honeysuckle' for the flower; or perhaps Shakespeare made a blunder.—STEEVENS: Baret, in his *Alvearie*, 1580, enforces the same distinction that Shakespeare thought it necessary [according to Johnson] to make: 'Woodbin that beareth the Honie-suckle.'—CAPELL, following Hanmer's text, which he says 'merits great commendation,' observes: 'honisuckle and woodbine are one, and "entwist" and "enring" are both predicated of the elm's "barky fingers."'—HEATH (55): A comma after 'entwist,' and another after 'enrings' will render any further change unnecessary. Thus:—'So the woodbine, the sweet honeysuckle doth gently entwist the barky fingers of the elm, so the female ivy enrings the same fingers.'—FARMER: It is certain that the 'woodbine' and the 'honey-suckle' were sometimes considered as different plants. In one of Taylor's poems, we have—'The woodbine, primrose, and the cowslip fine, The honisuckle, and the daffadill.'—STEEVENS: Were any change necessary I should not scruple to read the *weedbind*, i. e. smilax; a plant that twists round every other that grows in its way. In a very ancient translation of Macer's *Herball practised by Doctor Lynacre* is the following: 'Caprifolium is an herbe called woodbynde or withwynde, this groweth in hedges or in woodes, and it wyll beclyp a tre in her growynge, as doth yvye, and hath white flowers.'—GIFFORD, in a note (referred to by Boswell) on '—— behold! How the blue bindweed doth itself infold With honey-suckle, and both these intwine Themselves with bryony and jessamine,' &c.—Jonson's *Vision of Delight—Works*, vii, 308, thus observes:—This settles the meaning of [Titania's speech]. The woodbine of Shakespeare is the blue bindweed of Jonson: in many of our counties the woodbine is still the name for the great convolvulus.—NARES: The 'blue bindweed' [of Jonson, *ut supra*] is the blue convolvulus (Gerard, 864), but the calling it 'woodbine' [in the present passage] has naturally puzzled both readers and commentators; as it seems to say that the honeysuckle entwines the honeysuckle. Supposing convolvulus to be meant all is easy, and a beautiful passage preserved. . . . The name *woodbine* has been applied to several climbing plants, and even to the ivy. In a word, if we would correct the author himself, we should read: So doth the *bind-weed* the sweet honeysuckle gently entwist, &c. Otherwise we must so understand 'woodbine,' and be contented with it as a more poetical word than *bind-weed*, which probably was the feeling that occasioned it to be used.—HUNTER (i, 297): In fact woodbine and honeysuckle are but two names for one and the same plant, or, at most, the honeysuckle is but the flower of the woodbine. . . . The identity of the two is put beyond doubt by the following passage in Googe's *Book of Husbandry*: 'The other, *the honeysuckle or the woodbine*, beginneth to flower in June.'—p. 180. All notion, therefore, of the woodbine entwisting the honeysuckle is excluded. . . . It seems to me that the woodbine and the sweet honeysuckle are here in apposition.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): There are few readers of Shakespeare, in America at least, who have not seen the woodbine and the honeysuckle growing together, and twining round each other from their very roots to the top of the veranda on which they are trained; and to such persons this passage is simple and plain. . . . [The flowers] of the honeysuckle are long unbroken tubes of deep scarlet, somewhat formally grouped; those of the woodbine shorter, deeply indented from the edge, of a pale buff colour, and irregularly disposed. [It is to be feared that few American readers will recognise these flowers from this description. I suppose that White refers to what is commonly called 'the coral hon-

O how I loue thee! how I dote on thee! 51

Enter Robin goodfellow and Oberon.

Ob. Welcome good *Robin*:
Seeſt thou this ſweet ſight?
Her dotage now I doe begin to pitty. 55
For meeting her of late behinde the wood,
Seeking ſweet ſauors for this hatefull foole, 57

51. [they sleep. Cap.
52. Enter...] Enter Puck. Rowe. Oberon advances. Cap.
and Oberon.] Om. Qq.
53, 54. One line, Qq, Pope et seq.
57. *ſauors*] *ſauours* Q_1, Rowe, Rann, Hal. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. *favors* F_4.

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eysuckle,' to distinguish it from the 'trumpet honeysuckle,' or *tecoma;* and by woodbine he means the 'evergreen' variety. It is really, however, of small consequence, as long as White makes it clear that he here discriminates between 'woodbine' and 'honeysuckle.'—ED.]—DYCE: My friend, the late Rev. John Mitford, an excellent botanist, who at one time had maintained in print that Gifford's explanation of 'woodbine' was wrong, acknowledged at last that it was the only true one. (What an odd notion of poetic composition must those interpreters have who maintain that here *woodbine and honeysuckle are put in apposition as meaning the same plant*, and who, of course, consider 'entwine' to be an intransitive verb!)—W. A. WRIGHT: The word 'entwist' seems to describe the mutual action of two climbing plants, twining about each other, and I therefore prefer to consider the woodbine and the honeysuckle as distinct, the former being the convolvulus, rather than to adopt a construction and interpretation which do violence to the reader's intelligence. [The question, reduced to its simplest terms, is: Are there here two plants referred to, or only one? If there are two plants, then either one or both of them bears a name which belonged to the common speech of Shakespeare's day, and which we can now discover only by a resort to literature, an unsure authority when it deals with the popular names of wild flowers. To me it makes little difference what specific flower Titania calls the 'woodbine'; she means herself by it just as she designates the repulsive Bottom with two fairies busy scratching his head, under the name of that sweet, lovely flower, the honeysuckle; and as these two distinct vines entwist each other, so will she wind him in her arms. As will be seen by the foregoing notes, the consensus of opinion inclines to Gifford's interpretation of woodbine.—ED.]

49. **female**] STEEVENS: That is, because it always requires some support, which is poetically called its husband. So Milton, *Par. Lost*, V, 215–217: 'they led the vine To wed her elm; she spoused, about him twines Her marriageable arms.' So Catullus, lxii, 54: 'Ulmo conjuncta marito.'

57. **savors**] STEEVENS: *Favours* of Q_1, taken in the sense of ornaments, such as are worn at weddings, may be right.—DYCE (*Notes*, 62): I think *favours* decidedly right. Titania was seeking flowers for Bottom to wear as *favours;* compare Greene: 'These [fair women] with syren-like allurement so entised these quaint squires, that they bestowed all their *flowers* vpon them for *fauours*.'—*Quip for an Vpstart Courtier*, Sig. B 2, ed. 1620.—R. G. WHITE was at first (*Sh. Scholar*, 217) inclined to think that 'savours' is the true word because Bottom expresses a wish for the 'sweet

I did vpbraid her, and fall out with her.
For ſhe his hairy temples then had rounded,
With coronet of freſh and fragrant flowers.
And that ſame dew which ſomtime on the buds,
Was wont to ſwell like round and orient pearles;
Stood now within the pretty flouriets eyes,
Like teares that did their owne diſgrace bewaile.
When I had at my pleaſure taunted her,
And ſhe in milde termes beg'd my patience,
I then did aske of her, her changeling childe,
Which ſtraight ſhe gaue me, and her Fairy ſent
To beare him to my Bower in Fairy Land.
And now I haue the Boy, I will vndoe
This hateſull imperfection of her eyes.
And gentle *Pucke*, take this transformed ſcalpe,
From off the head of this *Athenian* ſwaine;
That he awaking when the other doe,
May all to *Athens* backe againe repaire,
And thinke no more of this nights accidents,

61. *ſomtime*] *sometimes* Johns.
63. *flouriets*] *flouret's* Johns. Mal. *flourets'* Steev.'93, Var. *flow'rets'* Knt et seq. (subs.).
68. *Fairy*] *fairies* Dyce, Ktly.
72. *transformed*] *transforming* D. Wilson.
73. *off*] *of* Q_1.
73. *this*] *the* Johns. Steev.'85, Rann.
74. *That he*] *That hee*, Q_1, Theob. Warb. Johns. Coll. Hal. Dyce. *That, he* Cam. White ii.
other] *others* Rowe+, Steev.'85, Mal.'90.
75. *May all*] *All may* Grey ap Cam.

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savour' of a honey-bag, but he recanted in his subsequent edition, and decided that 'favours' is surely right, wherewith agrees the present ED.

60. **With**] ABBOTT, § 89, refers the omission of the definite article here to that class of cases where it is omitted before a noun already defined by another noun. It seems to me, however, that it is, possibly, a case of absorption in the *th* of 'With.' —ED.

62. **orient**] HALLIWELL: Sparkling, pellucid. Compare, 'His orient liquor in a crystal glass.'—*Comus* [65].—W. A. WRIGHT: Compare *Par. Lost*, i, 546: 'Ten thousand banners rise into the air, With orient colours waving.'

63. **flouriets**] CAPELL: *Flourets'* is recommended by [Heath, 56], and is indeed a word of more proper and more analogous formation; but the other ['flouriet'] was the word of the time, as this editor thinks, but has no examples at hand.

68. **Fairy**] DYCE here reads *fairies*. See II, i, 65.

74. **other**] For examples of 'other' used as a plural, see ABBOTT, § 12.

75. **May all**] ABBOTT, § 399: This might be explained by transposition, 'may all' for *all may*, but more probably *they* is implied.

But as the fierce vexation of a dreame.
But firſt I will releaſe the Fairy Queene.

Be thou as thou waſt wont to be;
See as thou waſt wont to ſee.
Dians bud, or Cupids flower,
Hath ſuch force and bleſſed power.

Now my *Titania* wake you my ſweet Queene.
Tita. My *Oberon*, what viſions haue I ſeene!
Me-thought I was enamoured of an Aſſe.
Ob. There lies your loue.
Tita. How came theſe things to paſſe?
Oh, how mine eyes doth loath this viſage now!
Ob. Silence a while. *Robin* take off his head:
Titania, muſick call, and ſtrike more dead

78. *releaſe*] *relaſe* F_4.
79–82. Roman, Q_1.
79. Be thou] *Be*, Qq, Pope et seq.
79, 80. waſt] *was* Knt.
79. [touching her Eyes with an herb. Cap.
81. bud, or] *bud o'er* Thirlby, Theob. et seq.
84, &c. Tita.] Queen. Rowe.
88. *doth*] *doe* Q_1Ff, Rowe et seq.
loath this] *loathe this* Q_2. *loath his* Q_1, Cap. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Hal. Dyce Sta. Cam.
89. *off his*] *off this* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Hal. Dyce, Sta. Cam. *of this* Q_2.

79. **Be thou**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): In this 'thou' there is one of the instances in which it seems proper to allow strong probability and the authority of other editions to outweigh the dictum of the Folio. There is a change of rhythm for this little incantation, and that Shakespeare should have vitiated it in the very first line is improbable to the verge of impossibility; whereas the insertion of 'thou' in such a place by a transcriber or printer is an accident of a sort that frequently happens.

81. **Dians bud**] STEEVENS: This is the bud of the *Agnus Castus* or *Chaste Tree*. Thus, in Macer's *Herball*, 'The vertue of this herbe is, that he wyll kepe man and woman chaste.'—W. A. WRIGHT: It is more probably a product of Shakespeare's imagination, which had already endued 'Cupid's flower,' the Heart's Ease, with qualities not recognised in botany. [Was it the Heart's Ease in general which possessed these qualities, or only one particular 'little Western flower'?—ED.] Steevens's suggestion is, indeed, supported by Chaucer; see *The Flower and the Leaf*, 472–5: 'That is Diane, the goddesse of chastitie, And for because that she a maiden is, In her hond the braunch she beareth this, That *agnus castus* men call properly.'

81, 88. **or . . . loath this**] Here, within a few lines, we have two sophistications, which may be explained by the supposition that the compositors set up at dictation. —ED.

88. **this**] For other instances where *this* and *his* have supplanted one another, see WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 219, et seq.). The same interchange seems to have taken place with 'his' in the next line. See 'his intelligence,' I, i, 262.

Then common ſleepe ; of all theſe, fine the ſenſe. 91
Tita. Muſicke, ho muſicke, ſuch as charmeth ſleepe.
Muſick ſtill. 93

91. *common*] *cammon* F_2.
ſleepe ; of all theſe, fine] *ſleep ; of all theſe find* F_3F_4. *ſleep. Of all these find* Rowe i. *sleep of all these five* Thirlby, Theob. et seq.

92. *ho*] *howe* Q_1.

93. Muſick ſtill.] Om. Qq, Coll. Music, still. Cam. Still music. Theob. et cet.

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91. fine] See Text. Note for the correction of the punctuation by THEOBALD, whose note is: This most certainly is both corrupt in the text and pointing. Would music, that was to strike them into a deeper sleep than ordinary, contribute to *fine* (or *refine*) their senses? My emendation [*five*] needs no justification. The 'five' that lay asleep were Demetrius, Lysander, Hermia, Helen, and Bottom. I ought to acknowledge that Dr Thirlby likewise started and communicated this very correction.—ANON. [ap. Halliwell]: The word 'fine' here signifies *mulctare*, and consequently Titania does the very thing Oberon desires. She *fines* or *deprives* them of their sense. —HALLIWELL: The last-quoted observations show how very difficult it is to establish the propriety of any emendation to the satisfaction of every mind. Bottom must be presumed to be at some little distance from the other sleepers, and concealed from the observation of Theseus and his train, but, on the whole, the correction [of Theobald] is to be preferred to the above subtle explanation of the original text.

93. **Musick still**] COLLIER (ed. i): This means, probably, that the music was to cease before Puck spoke, as Oberon afterwards exclaims 'Sound music!' when it was to be renewed.—DYCE (*Remarks*, 48): 'Music still' is nothing more than *Still music;* compare a stage-direction in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Triumph of Time* (*Four Plays in One*), where, according to the old eds., the epithet applied to '*Trumpets*' is put last: '*Jupiter and Mercury descend severally.* Trumpets small *above.*' The music, instead of 'ceasing before Puck spoke,' was not intended to commence at all till Oberon had said 'Sound music!' The stage-direction here (as we frequently find in early eds. of plays) was placed prematurely, to warn the musicians to be in readiness.—COLLIER (ed. ii): If, as Mr Dyce (*Remarks*, 48) suggests, 'still music' had been meant, the direction would not have been 'music still.' He evidently does not understand the force of the adverb; he mistakes it for the adjective, which occurs afterwards.—DYCE (ed. ii): Yes, Mr Collier ventures so to write, *trusting that none of his readers will take the trouble to refer to my Remarks*, where I have quoted [a stage-direction] in which the epithet applied to '*Trumpets*' IS PUT LAST.—STAUNTON: We apprehend that by 'Music still' or *Still music* was meant *soft, subdued music*, such music as Titania could command, 'as charmeth sleep'; the object of it being to 'strike more dead Than common sleep.' This being effected, Oberon himself calls for more stirring strains while he and the Queen take hands, 'And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.'—DYCE (ed. ii): I am glad to find that Mr Staunton agrees with me as to the meaning of the words '*Music still.*' I cannot, however, agree with him in the rest of his explanation. I believe that the music is not heard till Oberon echoes Titania's call for it; and that to the said *still* or *soft* music (the sole object of which is to lull the five sleepers) some sort of a *pas de deux* is danced by the fairy king and queen.

Rob. When thou wak'ſt, with thine owne fooles eies peepe. (me

Ob. Sound muſick; come my Queen, take hands with
And rocke the ground whereon theſe ſleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to morrow midnight, ſolemnly
Dance in Duke *Theſeus* houſe triumphantly,
And bleſſe it to all faire poſterity.
There ſhall the paires of faithfull Louers be
Wedded, with *Theſeus*, all in iollity.

Rob. Faire King attend, and marke,
I doe heare the morning Larke.

Ob. Then my Queene in ſilence ſad,
Trip we after the nights ſhade;

94. *When thou wak'ſt*] Q_2, Knt. *When thou awak'ſt* Ff, Rowe+, Steev.'85, Hal. *Now, when thou wak'ſt* Q_1 et cet.
96. *hands*] *hand* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
101. *faire*] *far* Han. Warb.
poſterity] *proſperitie* Q_1, Cap. Mal. Var. Coll. Sing. Dyce i, Cam. Ktly.
102. *the*] *theſe* Ff, Rowe, Theob.+.
104. *Faire*] *Fair* F_2F_4, Rowe. *Fairy* Qq, Pope et seq.
106. *ſad,*] *ſade;* Theob. *staid* Daniel.
107. *the nights*] Q_2Ff. *nights* Q_1. *nightes* Ktly. *night's* Cam. ii. *the night's* Rowe et cet.

98. **new**] W. A. WRIGHT: It is difficult to say whether 'new' is here an adjective or an adverb. Probably the latter, as in *Ham.* II, ii, 510, 'Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work.'

101. **faire posterity**] WARBURTON: We should read '*far* posterity,' *i. e.* to the *remotest* posterity.—HEATH (p. 56): That is, 'And bestow on it the blessing of a fair fortune to all posterity,' or, to come nearer the literal construction: 'And bless it so that the fortunes of all posterity who shall enjoy it may be fair.' Thus by this beautiful figure the two parts or branches of the blessing are united and consolidated into one expression: its extent, 'to all posterity'; and its object, 'that all that posterity may be fair,' that is, both deserving and fortunate.—MONK MASON: In the concluding song, where Oberon blesses the nuptial bed, part of his benediction is that the posterity of Theseus shall be fair. See V, i, 403.—MALONE preferred *prosperity*, induced thereto by II, i, 77.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): *Prosperity* is a tame word here, especially as coming after 'fair.' [I prefer the present text. It involves a larger blessing. To Theseus's marriage the fairies bring present triumph, but on his house they confer the blessing of a fair posterity.—ED.]

106. **sad**] WARBURTON: This signifies only *grave, sober*, and is opposed to their dances and revels, which were now ended at the singing of the morning lark.—BLACKSTONE: A statute, 3 IIenry VII, c. xiv, directs certain offences . . . 'to be tried by twelve sad men of the king's household.' [Theobald's emendation (see *Text. Notes*) was well meant, but it is not a success. The defective rhyme certainly exposes 'sad' to suspicion.—ED.]

107. **the nights**] KEIGHTLEY (p. 135): Of 'nights' I have made a disyllable [*nightes*], as being more Shakespearian than 'the night's,' which most feebly and

We the Globe can compaſſe ſoone,
Swifter then the wandring Moone.
Tita. Come my Lord, and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I ſleeping heere was found,
Sleepers Lye ſtill.
With theſe mortals on the ground. *Exeunt.*
Winde Hornes.
Enter Theſeus, Egeus, Hippolita and all his traine.
Theſ. Goe one of you, finde out the Forreſter,
For now our obſeruation is perform'd;
And ſince we haue the vaward of the day,
My Loue ſhall heare the muſicke of my hounds.
Vncouple in the Weſterne valley, let them goe;

113. Sleepers Lye ſtill.] Om. Qq, Cap. et seq.
115. Winde Hornes.] Horns wind within. Cap. Horns winded within. Dyce. Scene II. Pope+. Act V, Sc. i. Fleay.
116. Egeus, Hippolita] Om. Qq. Egæus, Hippolita Ff.
121. *Vncouple*] *Uncoupl'd* Rann. conj. *Weſterne*] Om. Marshall. *let them*] Om. Pope+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Dyce ii, iii.

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inharmoniously throws the emphasis on 'the.' This genitive occurs more than once in our poet's earlier plays.—W. A. WRIGHT: 'Night's' is a disyllable, as 'moon's,' in II, i, 7, and 'earth's,' in *Temp.* IV, i, 110: 'Earth's increase, foison plenty.' [If the pause in these lines be observed, there will be, I think, no need of any barrel-organ regularity. 'Then my queen || in silence sad, Trip we after || the night's shade; We the Globe || can compass soon, Swifter than || the wandring moon.' As far as 'the night's shade' is concerned, the necessity of making 'night's' a disyllable is removed by the slight pause which we are forced to make between 'night's' and 'shade,' to avoid the conversion of the two words into one: *nightshade.*—ED.]

115. **Winde Hornes**] Again the mandatory direction of a stage-copy.—ED.

117. **Forrester**] KNIGHT calls attention to the fact that the Theseus of Chaucer was also a mighty hunter. The extract from Chaucer may be found in the Appendix, on the *Source of the Plot.*

118. **obseruation**] Of the rites of May, see 'obseruance for a morne of May,' I, i, 177.

119. **vaward**] DYCE: The forepart (properly of an army, 'The Vaward, *Prima acies.*'—Coles's *Lat. and. Eng. Dict.*).

120–140. HAZLITT (*Characters*, &c., p. 132): Even Titian never made a hunting-piece of a *gusto* so fresh and lusty, and so near the first ages of the world, as this.

121. **Vncouple**, &c.] CAPELL: Might not the author's copy run thus: 'Let them uncouple in the western valley; | Go; Dispatch, I say, and find the forrester.' | ? where 'Go' is no part of the verse, but a redundance, like 'Do' in this line in *Lear*: 'Do; kill thy physician and the fee bestow,' &c.

Diſpatch I ſay, and finde the Forreſter. 122
We will faire Queene, vp to the Mountaines top.
And marke the muſicall confuſion
Of hounds and eccho in coniunction. 125
Hip. I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus* once,
When in a wood of *Creete* they bayed the Beare 127

122. [Exit an Attend. Dyce.
127. *bayed*] *bay'd* Rowe et seq. *chas'd* Rann. conj. (?)
127. *Beare*] *boar* Han. Cap. Dyce ii, iii, Coll. iii.

126. **Hercules**] THEOBALD (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 235): Does not the poet forget the truth of fable a little here? Hippolyta was just brought into the country of the Amazons by Theseus, and how could she have been in Crete with Hercules and Cadmus?

127. **Beare**] THEOBALD (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 235): Should it not be *Boar?* The Erymanthian Boar, you know, is famous among the Herculean Labours.—CAPELL: The 'bear' is no animal of such a warm country as Crete; and, besides, in penning this passage the poet appears evidently to have had in his eye the *boar* of Thessaly, and to have picked up some ideas from the famous description of that hunting.—STEEVENS refers to the painting, in the temple of Mars, of 'The hunte strangled with the wilde beres,' Chaucer, *Knightes Tale*, line 1160, ed. Morris, and observes: Bear-baiting was likewise once a diversion esteemed proper for royal personages, even of the softer sex. While the princess Elizabeth remained at Hatfield House, under the custody of Sir Thomas Pope, she was visited by Queen Mary. The next morning they were entertained with a grand exhibition of bear-baiting, 'with which their highnesses were right well content.'—*Life of Sir Thomas Pope*, cited by Warton, *Hist. Eng. Poetry*, ii, 391.—MALONE: In *The Winter's Tale* Antigonus is destroyed by a bear, who is chased by hunters. See also *Venus and Adonis*, 883: 'For now she knows it is no gentle chase, But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud.'—TOLLET: Holinshed, with whose histories our poet was well acquainted, says: 'the beare is a beast commonlie hunted in the East countrie.' Pliny, Plutarch, &c. mention *bear-hunting*. Turberville, in his *Book of Hunting*, has two chapters on hunting the *bear*.—DYCE (*Remarks*, 49): In spite of what the commentators say [as just quoted], I am strongly inclined to think that 'bear' is a misprint for *boar*.—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 50): Dyce's conjecture, *boar* (or is he referring to another critic who proposed it?), deserves attention. The story of Meleager would be sufficient to suggest it to Shakespeare.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Passages in Chaucer's *Knightes Tale*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Pliny, and Plutarch so justify 'bear' that it must remain undisturbed, but I believe that the easiest of all misprints in Shakespeare's time was made, and that we should read *boar*. This is also Mr Dyce's opinion.—DYCE (ed. ii), after quoting the notes of Walker and R. G. White, just given, adds: The 'passages' above mentioned formerly weighed little with me; now they weigh nothing.—W. A. WRIGHT: The references to 'bear' and 'bear-hunting' in Shakespeare are sufficiently numerous to justify the old reading, without going into the naturalist's question whether there are bears in Crete. Besides, according to Pliny (viii, 83), there were neither bears nor boars in the island. We may therefore leave the natural history to adjust itself, as well as the chronology which brings Cadmus with Hercules and Hippolyta into the hunting-field together.

With hounds of *Sparta*; neuer did I heare
Such gallant chiding. For beſides the groues,
The skies, the fountaines, euery region neere,
Seeme all one mutuall cry. I neuer heard
So muſicall a diſcord, ſuch ſweet thunder.
Theſ. My hounds are bred out of the *Spartan* kinde,
So flew'd, ſo ſanded, and their heads are hung

130. *fountaines*] *mountains* Anon. ap. Theob. 131. *Seeme*] *Seem'd* Ff, Rowe et seq.

128. **Sparta**] W. A. WRIGHT: The Spartan hounds were celebrated for their swiftness and quickness of scent. Compare Virgil, *Georgics*, iii, 405: 'Veloces Spartæ catulos acremque Molossum Pasce sero pingui.'—HALLIWELL: See 'This latter was a hounde of Crete, the other was of Spart,' in the description of Actæon's dogs in Golding's *Ovid* [fol. 33, ed. 1567].

129. **chiding**] STEEVENS: 'Chiding' in this instance, means only *sound*. So in *Hen. VIII.*: III, ii, 197: 'As doth a rock against the chiding flood.'

130. **fountaines**] THEOBALD: It has been proposed to me that the author probably wrote *mountains*, from whence an echo rather proceeds than from 'fountains,' but we have the authority of the ancients for Lakes, Rivers, and Fountains returning a sound. See Virgil, *Æneid*, xii, 756: 'Tum vero exoritur clamor; ripaeque lacusque Responsant circa, et coelum tonat omne tumultu.' Propertius, *Eleg.* I, xx, 49: 'Cui procul Alcides iterat responsa; sed illi Nomen ab extremis fontibus aura refert.' —DYCE (ed. ii) quotes the foregoing lines from Virgil, and adds, in effect, that after all he is 'by no means sure that our author did not write *mountains*.'

131. **Seeme**] One of the many examples collected by WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 61) where final *d* and final *e* are confounded in the Folio, 'arising in some instances, perhaps, from the juxtaposition of *d* and *e* in the compositor's case, but far oftener—as is evident from the frequency of the erratum—from something in the old method of writing the final *e* or *d*, and which those who are versed in Elizabethan MSS may perhaps be able to explain.' In a footnote Walker's editor, LETTSOM, says: 'Walker's sagacity, in default of positive knowledge, has led him to the truth. The *e*, with the last upstroke prolonged and terminated in a loop, might easily be taken for *d*. It is frequently found so written.'

133. **My hounds**] BAYNES (*Edin. Rev.* Oct. 1872): Shakespeare might probably enough, as the commentators suggest, have derived his knowledge of Cretan and Spartan hounds from Golding's *Ovid*. . . . But in enumerating the points of the slow, sure, deep-mouthed hound it can hardly be doubted he had in view the celebrated Talbot breed nearer home.

134. **flew'd**] WARTON: Hanmer justly remarks that 'flews' are the large chaps of a deep-mouthed hound. See Golding's *Ovid*, iii [fol. 33, b. 1567]: 'And shaggie Rugge with other twaine that had a Syre of Crete, And Dam of Sparta: Tone of them callde Iollyboy, a great And large flewd hound.'

134. **sanded**] JOHNSON: So marked with small spots.—STEEVENS: It means of a sandy colour, which is one of the true developments of a blood-hound.—COLLIER (ed. i): This may refer to the sandy marks on the dogs, or possibly it is a misprint for *sounded*, in allusion to their mouths. [This conjecture is omitted in Collier's ed.

With eares that ſweepe away the morning dew,
Crooke kneed, and dew-lapt, like *Theſſalian* Buls,
Slow in purſuit, but match'd in mouth like bels,
Each vnder each. A cry more tuneable
Was neuer hallowed to, nor cheer'd with horne,
In *Creete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Theſſaly*;
Iudge when you heare. But ſoft, what nimphs are theſe?
Egeus. My Lord, this is my daughter heere aſleepe,
And this *Lyſander*, this *Demetrius* is,
This *Helena*, olde *Nedars Helena*,

136. Theſſalian] Theſſalonian F_4.
139. *hallowed*] *hollawed* F_2F_3. *hollowd* Qq. *hallow'd* Rowe. *hallo'd* Theob. *halloo'd* Cap. *holla'd* Mal.
142, 150, &c. Egeus.] Egæ. Ff (throughout).
142. *this is*] *this* Q_2.

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ii, but it reappears in ed. iii. In the mean time Dyce (*Remarks*, 49) had asked: 'Did Mr Collier really believe that *sounded* could be used in the sense of "having, or giving forth, a sound"? Besides, the earlier portion of this speech is entirely occupied by a description of the *appearance and make* of the hounds ("sanded" denoting their general colour); in a later part of it, Theseus describes their *cry*—"match'd in mouth like bells."'

137. **like bels**] BAYNES (*Edin. Rev.* Oct. 1872): It is clear that in Shakespeare's day the greatest attention was paid to the musical quality of the cry. It was a ruling consideration in the formation of a pack that it should possess the musical fulness and strength of a perfect canine quire. And hounds of good voice were selected and arranged in the hunting chorus on the same general principles that govern the formation of a cathedral or any other more articulate choir. Thus: 'If you would have your kennell for sweetnesse of cry, then you must compound it of some large dogges, that have deepe solemne mouthes, and are swift in spending, which must, as it were, beare the base in the consort, then a double number of roaring, and loud ringing mouthes, which must beare the counter tenour, then some hollow, plaine, sweete mouthes, which must beare the meane or middle part; and soe with these three parts of musicke you shall make your cry perfect.'—[Markham's *Country Contentments*, p. 6, W. A. Wright. Down even to the days of Addison, and it may be down even to this day, for aught I know, this tuneableness was sought after in a pack of hounds. We all remember good old Sir Roger de Coverley's pack of *Stop-hounds*: 'what these want in Speed, he endeavours to make amends for by the Deepness of their mouths and the Variety of their notes, which are suited in such manner to each other, that the whole cry makes up a complete consort. He is so nice in this particular that a gentleman having made him a present of a very fine hound the other day, the Knight returned it by the Servant, with a great many expressions of civility, but desired him to tell his Master that the dog he had sent was indeed a most excellent *Bass*, but that at present he only wanted a *Counter-Tenor*. Could I believe my friend had ever read Shakespeare, I should certainly conclude he had taken the hint from Theseus in the "Midsummer Night's Dream."'—ED.]

I wonder of this being heere together.
The. No doubt they roſe vp early, to obſerue
The right of May; and hearing our intent,
Came heere in grace of our ſolemnity.
But ſpeake *Egeus*, is not this the day
That *Hermia* ſhould giue anſwer of her choice?
Egeus. It is, my Lord.
Theſ. Goe bid the huntſ-men wake them with their hornes.

Hornes and they wake.
Shout within, they all ſtart vp.

Theſ. Good morrow friends: Saint *Valentine* is paſt,
Begin theſe wood birds but to couple now?
Lyſ. Pardon my Lord.
Theſ. I pray you all ſtand vp.
I know you two are Riuall enemies.
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is is ſo farre from iealouſie,
To ſleepe by hate, and feare no enmity.

145. *of this*] Q_2Ff, Rowe i. *at their* Pope+, Cap. Steev.'85. *of their* Q_1 et cet.
147. *right*] *Rite* Pope et seq. (subs.).
148. *grace*] *grace* F_4.
154, 155. Shoute within: they all starte vp. Winde hornes. Qq.
158. [He, and the rest, kneel to Theseus. Cap.
162. *is is*] F_1.

145. **of**] See "'Twere pity of my life,' III, i, 42, and ABBOTT, § 174, for many other examples of this usage, where we should now use a different preposition. See, too, five lines lower down, 'answer of her choice.'

147. **right**] From the apparent confusion in the spelling of the words 'right' and 'rite,' we are hardly justified, I think, in imputing ignorance to the compositors. They spelled for the ear (and probably by the ear), and not, as we spell, for the eye.—ED.

150. **That**] For other examples where 'that' is equivalent to *at which time, when*, see ABBOTT, § 284; also V, i, 373: '*That* the graves,' &c.

156. **Valentine**] STEEVENS: Alluding to the old saying that birds begin to couple on St Valentine's day. [Shakespeare knew quite as well as we know that Theseus lived long before St Valentine. But what mattered it to him, any more than it matters to us?—ED.]

158. CAPELL here added a very superfluous stage-direction, which few editors after him have had the courage to reject. Whoever is so dull as not to see the meaning in Theseus's 'I pray you all stand up,' had better close his Shakespeare and read no more that day—nor any other day. Why did not Capell further instruct us by adding *Theseus looks at them*?—ED.

162, 163. **so farre . . . To**] For other examples of the omission of *as* after *so*, see ABBOTT, § 281.

Lyſ. My Lord, I ſhall reply amazedly,
Halfe ſleepe, halfe waking. But as yet, I ſweare,
I cannot truly ſay how I came heere.
But as I thinke (for truly would I ſpeake)
And now I doe bethinke me, ſo it is;
I came with *Hermia* hither. Our intent
Was to be gone from *Athens*, where we might be
Without the perill of the *Athenian* Law.

165. *ſleepe*] *'sleep* Cap. Steev. Mal.'90, Knt, Sing. Hal. Sta. Ktly.
167, 168. (*for...is*] In parenthesis, Cap. et seq. (subs.).
168. *I doe*] *do I* Glo. (misprint?). *bethinke*] *methink* Pope, Han.
170, 171. *Athens, where we might be Without...Law.*] Q_2Ff, Rowe+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Knt, Hal. Sta. *Athens: where we might Without...lawe*, Q_1. *Athens, where we might Be without peril...law.* Han. *Athens, where we might Without...law*— Coll. Sing. White i, Ktly. *Athens, where we might, Without...law,*— Dyce, White ii. *Athens, where we might, Without...law.* Cam.

165. **Halfe sleep, halfe waking**] W. A. WRIGHT: Some editors regard 'sleep' and 'waking' as adjectives, and print the former *'sleep*. Schmidt (*Lex.* p. 1419*a*) gives this as an instance of the same termination applying to two words, so that 'sleep and waking' are equivalent to *sleeping and waking*. He quotes, as a possibly parallel case, *Tro. & Cres.* V, viii, 7: 'Even with the vail and darking of the sun.' In this case, however, 'vail' may be a substantive formed from a verb, of which there are many instances in Shakespeare. I am inclined to think that both 'sleep' and 'waking' are here substantives, and are loosely connected with the verb 'reply'; just as we find in *Merry Wives*, III, ii, 69: 'He speaks holiday'; *Twelfth Night*, I, v, 115: 'He speaks nothing but madman'; *King John*, II, i, 462: 'He speaks plain cannon-fire'; and as the Ff read in *As You Like It*, III, ii, 226: 'Speak sad brow and true maid.' [When Schmidt, in the note just cited by Wright, says of the example from *Tro. & Cres*, 'It would not, therefore, be safe to infer the existence [here] of a substantive *vail*,' it seems to me that he considers the passage as more than 'a possibly parallel case.' I quite agree with Wright in his explanation, not only of the present line, but also of the line from *Tro. & Cres.*, and I would further extend the criticism to almost all the examples collected by Schmidt in his section on 'Suffixes and Prefixes Omitted.'—ED.]

170, 171. **Athens, where . . . Law.**] COLLIER: The reading of Q_1 is beyond dispute correct [viz. a comma after 'Law,' which Collier holds to be equivalent to his dash], Lysander being interrupted by the impatience of Egeus, with 'Enough, enough!'—DYCE (ed. ii): Q_2 and the Ff complete the sentence very awkwardly by adding 'be' to the reading of Q_1. Perhaps Hanmer was right in his text.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): The 'be' is fatal to the rhythm of the line, and not only so, but to the sense of the passage. For, as others have remarked, it is plain that Egeus interrupts Lysander with great impetuosity; and, beside, he adds the explanation, 'They would have stolen away,' &c., which would have been entirely superfluous had Lysander completed the expression of his intent.—STAUNTON: 'Without the peril' is '*beyond* the peril,' &c. 'Without,' in this sense, occurs repeatedly in Shakespeare and the books of his age. There is a memorable instance of it in *The Temp.* V, i.

Ege. Enough, enough, my Lord : you haue enough;
I beg the Law, the Law, vpon his head :
They would haue ſtolne away, they would *Demetrius*,
Thereby to haue defeated you and me :
You of your wife, and me of my conſent;
Of my conſent, that ſhe ſhould be your wife.
Dem. My Lord, faire *Helen* told me of their ſtealth,
Of this their purpoſe hither, to this wood,
And I in furie hither followed them;
Faire *Helena*, in fancy followed me.
But my good Lord, I wot not by what power,
(But by ſome power it is) my loue
To *Hermia* (melted as the ſnow)
Seems to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,
Which in my childehood I did doat vpon :

179. *this wood*] *the wood* Rowe.
180. *followed*] *follow'd* Rowe et seq.
181. *followed*] Q_2Ff, Rowe, Pope, Han. White i. *following* Q_1, Theob. et cet.
183–185. (*But...gaude*] Lines end, *Hermia...now...gaude* Pope et seq.
184. *melted as*] *Is melted as* Pope+. *Melted as doth* Cap. Mal. Steev.'93, Knt, White, Hal. Coll. iii. *Melted as is* Steev. '85, Rann. *Melted as melts* Dyce ii, iii, Huds. *Melted e'en as* Ktly. *All melted as* Sta. conj. *Immaculate as* Bulloch. *Melted as thaws* Kinnear. *So melted as* or *Being melted as* Schmidt.
186. *doat*] *dote* Qq.

271 : 'a witch . . . That could control the moon . . . And deal in her command without her power.' Here 'without her power' means *beyond* her power or *sphere*, as I am strongly inclined to think the poet wrote. Thus, too, in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, I, iv: 'now I apprehend you; your phrase was *Without* me before.'—W. A. WRIGHT: We cannot lay much stress on the comma at 'law' in Q_1. 'Where we might' is simply *wheresoever we might*. [Unquestionably Staunton's interpretation of 'without' is correct; it is used locatively, in the same way, in I, ii, 97. I prefer to retain the 'be,' notwithstanding its rhythmical superfluity.—ED.]

181. fancy] That is, love.

182. wot] W. A. WRIGHT: This is properly a preterite (A.-S. *wât*, from *witan*, to know), and is used as a present, just as *oîda* and *novi*. And not only is it used as a present in sense, but it is inflected like a present tense, for we find the third person singular 'wots' or 'wotteth.'

184. melted] The irregularity of the lines possibly indicates an obscurity in the MS. Some monosyllable has been lost, and the Text. Notes show the editorial gropings for it. Of Capell's *loth*, R. G. White says that the line is prose without it, and Staunton says it is ungrammatical with it. Abbott, § 486, suggests that perhaps 'melted' was prolonged in pronunciation, which is doubtful, I think, because meaningless. I prefer Dyce's 'Melted as *melts*,' it is smooth, and the iteration may possibly have led to the sophistication.—ED.

185. gaude] See I, i, 41.

And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,
The obiect and the pleaſure of mine eye,
Is onely *Helena.* To her, my Lord,
Was I betroth'd, ere I ſee *Hermia*,
But like a ſickneſſe did I loath this food,

190. *betroth'd*] *betrothed* Q_1, Rowe+, Cap.
ſee Hermia] QqFf. *did see Hermia* Rowe i, Cap. Mal.'90. *Hermia saw* Rowe ii+. *saw Hermia* Steev. et cet.
191. *But like a*] *But like in* Steev.'93 et seq. (except Sta.). *Belike as* Bulloch. *When, like in* Kinnear.

190. **see**] HENRY JOHNSON (p. xv): 'See' for *saw* occurs very commonly in dialect usage in Maine, and presumably in Northern New England generally, 'Soons he see me cummin, he run.'

191. **like a sickness**] 'A sickness,' says Capell, means 'a sick thing or one sick; a common metonymy of the abstract for the concrete.'—STEEVENS changed the phrase from a preposition to a conjunction, and read 'like *in* sickness,' and owed the correction, as he said, to Dr Farmer; but HALLIWELL quotes a passage from *The Student* Oxford, 1750, where this same correction is made on the ground that 'it is little better than nonsense to make Demetrius say that he loathed the food like as he loathed a sickness.'—W. A. WRIGHT adopts Farmer's correction, but says he is 'not satisfied' with it, and the repetition of 'But,' he continues, 'inclines me to suspect that there is a further corruption.' [I agree with Wright in thinking that there is corruption here, and that it lies in the repetition of 'But.' That there was *a* repetition seems to me not unlikely, but it originally lay in a repetition of 'Now.' Lettsom (*Walker's Crit.* ii, 115) supposes that the former 'But' has intruded into the place of *Then*. I suppose that the latter 'But' has intruded into the place of 'Now.' The strong contrast between his former and his present state, which Demetrius emphasises, warrants the repetition: '*Now*, as in health, come to my natural taste, *Now* do I,' &c. As for Farmer's change, it is as harmless as it is needless. I see no nonsense in saying that a man loathes a sickness. We all do. Had the word been *poison*, we should have been spared all notes. Farmer's change, however, serves to show us how little repugnance there was, to cultivated ears of that day, to the use of 'like' as a conjunction. In this connection see a valuable article by WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 115), where many instances are given of the use of 'like' in 'the sense of *as*—perhaps for *like as*, as *where* for *whereas*; *when whenas*.' The present passage heads the list, with Steevens's text, 'like *in* sickness,' which apparently both Walker and his editor, Lettsom, assumed to be the original reading. See, too, as supplementary to this article, *The Nation*, New York, 4 Aug. 1892, where Dr F. HALL, of great authority in English, has given many additional examples, and whose conclusion is as follows: 'The antiquity [of the conjunction *like*] proves to be very considerable; few good writers have ever lent it their sanction; at one stage of its history it was confined mostly to poetry, and its repute, as literary or formal English, is now but indifferent. Yet, as a colloquialism, it is in our day, here in England, widely current in all ranks of society, from the highest to the lowest. . . . Against no one, therefore, can the charge be brought, otherwise than arbitrarily, of committing an absolute and indefensible solecism, if he chooses, in his talk, to say, for instance, "I think *like* you do."' —ED.]

But as in health, come to my naturall taſte,
Now doe I wiſh it, loue it, long for it,
And will for euermore be true to it.
Theſ. Faire Louers, you are fortunately met;
Of this diſcourſe we ſhall heare more anon.
Egeus, I will ouer-beare your will;
For in the Temple, by and by with vs,
Theſe couples ſhall eternally be knit.
And for the morning now is ſomething worne,
Our purpos'd hunting ſhall be ſet aſide.
Away, with vs to *Athens*; three and three,
Wee'll hold a feaſt in great ſolemnitie.
Come *Hippolitæ*. *Exit Duke and Lords.*
Dem. Theſe things ſeeme ſmall & vndiſtinguiſhable,
Like farre off mountaines turned into Clouds.
Her. Me-thinks I ſee theſe things with parted eye,
When euery things ſeemes double.
Hel. So me-thinkes:
And I haue found *Demetrius*, like a iewell,

192. *But*] *Yet* Han.
193. *doe I*] *I doe* Q_1, Cam. White ii.
196. *we ſhall heare more*] *we more will here* Q_1, Steev.'93, Var. Coll. Sing. Dyce, Hal, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii (all reading *hear*). *we will heare more* Q_2, Cap. Mal. Knt.
203, 204. *Wee'll*...Hippolitæ] One line, Qq.
204. *Come*] *Come, my* Han. Cap. Rann, Dyce ii, iii, Huds.
204, 216. Hippolitæ] Q_2.
204. Exit...Lords.] Om. Q_1. Exit. Q_2.
210. *found*] *fonnd* Q_1.
like] Om. Han.
iewell] *Gemell* Theob. Warb. Cap. *gimmal* Anon. (ap. Sing. i).

196. **we shall heare more**] WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 50): I *somewhat* suspect the inversion [of Q_1].—LETTSOM (in a foot-note to this): Here we have three authorities [F_1, Q_1 and Q_2] at variance, and who knows but Shakespeare wrote *more will we hear*?

205. **Dem.**] CAPELL (114, *b*) queries if this speech should not be given to Lysander, but gives no reason. Probably, however, for the sake of a more even distribution of speeches.—ED.

207, 209. **Me-thinkes**] WALKER (*Vers.* 279) is undoubtedly right in surmising that in both these instances the accent is on 'Me.'

207. **parted eye**] DEIGHTON: As one would if one's eyes were not in focus with each other.

208. **things seemes**] The *s* in 'things' probably comes under Walker's rule (given at length at I, i, 239) of an interpolated *s*, but it is possible that the ear of the compositor was deceived by the *s* immediately following in 'seemes.'—ED.

210. **iewell**] WARBURTON: Hermia had observed that things appeared *double* to her. Helena replies, *so, methinks;* and then subjoins that Demetrius was like a *jewel*,

[210. iewell]

her own and not her own. He is here, then, compared to something which had the property of appearing to be one thing when it was another. Not the property sure of a jewel; or, if you will, of none but a false one. We should read 'like a *gemell.*' From *gemellus*, a twin. For Demetrius had that night acted two such different parts that she could hardly think them both played by one and the same Demetrius, but that there were twin Demetriuses, like the two Sosias in the farce.—THEOBALD incontinently adopted this emendation in his text, and observed in a note: 'If some overnice spirits should object to *Gemell* wanting its authorities as an English word, I think fit to observe, in aid of my friend's fine conjecture, that it is no new thing with Shakespeare to coin and enfranchise words fairly derived.' Furthermore, Theobald finds both in Blount's *Glossographia* and in Philips's *World of Words*, 'Geminels,' *i. e.* Twins; and lastly, that there are 'other passages where Shakespeare uses the same manner of thought,' namely, in the case of twins in the *Comedy of Err.* and in *Twelfth Night.*—CAPELL, the editor to whom of all others we are most indebted for the text of to-day, was beguiled by the glitter of Warburton's tinsel, and also adopted it, and not only finds Warburton's reasons satisfactory in themselves, but 'that there is in *gemell* a pleasantry, and in 'jewel' a vulgarity, that is a further recommendation of *gemell.*' The pleasantry arises, he says, 'from Helena's being now in good spirits, and able to treat her lover in the vein of her sister Hermia, her friendship's sister.'—JOHNSON: This emendation is ingenious enough to be true.—HEATH (p. 57), after denouncing the emendation as neither English nor French, gives his own paraphrase of the passage, but is not as successful therein as were Ritson and Malone subsequently. 'I have found Demetrius,' thus paraphrases Heath, 'but I feel myself in the same situation as one who, after having long lost a most valuable jewel, recovers it at last, when he least hoped to do so. The joy of this recovery, succeeding the despair of ever finding it, together with the strange circumstances which restored it to his hands, make him even doubt whether it be his own or not. He can scarcely be persuaded to believe his good fortune.' In support of Warburton's *gemell*, FARMER and STEEVENS both cite examples of its use in Drayton's *Barons Wars.*—RITSON (*Remarks*, p. 46): The learned critic [Warburton] wilfully misstates Helena's words to found his *ingenious emendation* (as every foolish and impertinent proposal is, by the courtesy of editors, intitled); she says that she has found Demetrius as a person finds a jewel or thing of great value, in which his property is so precarious as to make it uncertain whether it belongs to him or not. —MALONE: Helena, I think, means to say that having *found* Demetrius *unexpectedly*, she considered her property in him as insecure as that which a person has in a jewel that he has *found* by *accident;* which he knows not whether he shall retain, and which, therefore, may properly enough be called *his own and not his own.* She does not say, as Warburton has represented, that Demetrius *was like a jewel*, but that she had *found him* like a jewel, &c. [This explanation is to me entirely satisfactory. Of recent editors, STAUNTON has a good word for *gemell*, which, he says, 'is preferable to any explanation yet given of the text as it stands.']—C. BATTEN (*The Academy*, 1 June, '76) suggests *double*, which 'in the jewellery trade means "a counterfeit stone composed of two pieces of crystal, with a piece of foil between them, so that they have the same appearance as if the whole substance of the crystal were coloured." Of course the use of the word in this sense would require the knowledge of an expert, and this Shakespeare had, as is evident from his frequent use of the word "foil."'

Mine owne, and not mine owne.

Dem. It ſeemes to mee,
That yet we ſleepe, we dreame. Do not you thinke,
The Duke was heere, and bid vs follow him?

Her. Yea, and my Father.

Hel. And *Hippolitæ.*

Lyſ. And he bid vs follow to the Temple.

Dem. Why then we are awake; lets follow him, and by the way let vs recount our dreames.

Bottome wakes. *Exit Louers.*

Clo. When my cue comes, call me, and I will anſwer. My next is, moſt faire *Piramus.* Hey ho. *Peter Quince?* *Flute* the bellowes-mender? *Snout* the tinker? *Starueling?* Gods my life! Stolne hence, and left me aſleepe: I haue had a moſt rare viſion. I had a dreame, paſt the wit of man, to ſay, what dreame it was. Man is but an Aſſe,

212. Dem. *It*] Ff, Rowe+, Steev.'93, Knt, White i. Dem. *Are you ſure That we are awake? It* Qq, Steev.'85, Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce i, Hal. Sta. Cam. Dem. *But are you sure That we are well awake? it* Cap. Rann, Dyce ii, iii. Dem. *But are you sure That we are yet awake? It* Ktly. Dem. *Are you sure that we're awake? It* White ii. Dem. *But are you sure That now we are awake? It* Schmidt.

ſeemes] *seems so* Rowe i.

213. *That yet*] *That* F_3F_4, Rowe i.

217. *he bid*] *he did bid* Q_1, Theob. Warb. et seq.

follow] *to follow* Pope, Han.

218, 219. Two lines, ending *him... dreames* Rowe ii et seq.

219. *let vs*] *lets* Q_1.

220. Scene III. Pope+.

Bottome...Louers] Om. Q_1. Exit. Q_2. As they go out Bottom wakes. Theob.

222. Peter] Peeter Q_1.

225. *I had*] *I haue had* Qq, Cap. et seq.

212. **Dem. It**] See Text. Notes for a sentence to be found only in the Qq. 'I had once injudiciously restored these words,' says STEEVENS, 'but they add no weight to the sense of the passage, and create such a defect in the measure as is best remedied by their omission.'—DYCE (ed. ii) quotes LETTSOM as saying that 'Capell's insertions seem to me to improve the sense as well as restore the metre. I had hit upon the same conjectures long before I became acquainted with Capell.'—R. G. WHITE: Every reader with an ear and common sense must be glad that words so superfluous and so fatal to the rhythm of two lines do not appear in F_1. But although there omitted, they have been industriously recovered from the Qq by those who consider that antiquity, not authenticity, gives authority. [R. G. White joined the band of the industrious when putting forth his second edition.—ED.]—KEIGHTLEY: The poet's words may have been, 'Are you sure we are awake? it seems to me.' But that would make the preceding speech terminate in a manner that does not occur in this play.

215. **Yea**] W. A. WRIGHT: 'Yea' is here the answer to a question framed in the negative, contrary to the rule laid down by Sir Thomas More, according to which it should be 'yes.'

if he goe about to expound this dreame. Me-thought I was, there is no man can tell what. Me thought I was, and me-thought I had. But man is but a patch'd foole, if he will offer to ſay, what me-thought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the eare of man hath not ſeen, mans hand is not able to taſte, his tongue to conceiue, nor his heart to report, what my dreame was. I will get *Peter Quince* to write a ballet of this dreame, it ſhall be called *Bottomes Dreame*, becauſe it hath no bottome; and I will ſing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke. Peraduenture, to make it the more gracious, I ſhall ſing it at her death. *Exit.*

227. *to expound*] *expound* Q_1.
227, 229, 230. *Me-thought*] *Me thought* Q_1.
229. *a patch'd*] *patcht a* Qq.
234. *ballet*] *Ballad* F_4.
236. *a play*] *the play* Han. Rann, Hal. Coll. MS. *our play* Walker Dyce ii, iii, Hudson.
238. *at her*] *after* Theob.+, Cap. Rann, Sta. Dyce ii, Coll. iii. *at Thisby's* Coll. MS.

229. **patch'd foole**] JOHNSON: That is, a fool in a parti-coloured coat.—STAUNTON: I have met with a remarkable proof of the supposed connexion between the term *patch*, applied to a fool, and the garb such a character sometimes wore, in a Flemish picture of the sixteenth century. In this picture, which represents a grand *al fresco* entertainment of the description given to Queen Elizabeth during her 'Progresses,' there is a procession of masquers and mummers, led by a fool or jester, whose dress is covered with many-coloured coarse patches from head to heel.

230. **The eye of man**, &c.] HALLIWELL: Mistaking words was a source of merriment before Shakespeare's time. . . . This kind of humour was so very common, it is by no means necessary to consider, with some, that Shakespeare intended Bottom to parody Scripture.

236. **a play**] WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 320) has collected several instances of the confusion of *a* and *our*; he therefore conjectures '*our* play' here; DYCE (ed. ii) and HUDSON adopted the conjecture.

238. **at her death**] THEOBALD: At *her* death? At *whose?* In all Bottom's speech there is not the least mention of any she-creature to whom this relative can be coupled. I make not the least scruple, but Bottom, for the sake of a jest and to render his *Voluntary*, as we may call it, the more gracious and extraordinary, said, 'I shall sing it *after* death.' He, as Pyramus, is killed upon the scene, and so might promise to rise again at the conclusion of the Interlude and give the duke his dream by way of a song. The source of the corruption of the text is very obvious. The *f* in *after* being sunk by the vulgar pronunciation, the copyist might write it from the sound, *a'ter*, which, the wise editors not understanding, concluded two words were erroneously got together; so splitting them, and clapping in an *h*, produced the present reading, 'at her.'—CAPELL: The singing after death does not allude to Pyramus' death, but a death in some other play, 'a play' generally; opportunities of which the speaker was very certain of, from the satisfaction he made no question of giving in

[*Scene II.*]

Enter Quince, Flute, Thisbie, Snout, and Starueling.

Quin. Haue you ſent to *Bottomes* houſe? Is he come home yet?

Staru. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt hee is tranſported.

Thiſ. If he come not, then the play is mar'd. It goes not forward, doth it?

Scene IV. Pope+. Act V, Sc. ii. Fleay. Scene II. Cap. et seq.

[Changes to the Towne. Theob. Athens. Han. A Room in Quince's House. Cap.

1. Thisbie] Om. Rowe ii et seq.

1. Snout, and Starueling] and the rabble. Qq.

4. Staru.] Flut. Qq.

6, 10, 14, &c. Thif.] Flute. Rowe ii et seq.

7. *not*] Om. F_3F_4, Rowe i.

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discharging his present part; perhaps, too, there is a wipe in these words upon some play of the poet's time, in which a singing of this sort had been practised.—STAUNTON: Theobald's explanation is extremely plausible. From the old text no ingenuity has ever succeeded in extracting a shred of humour or even meaning.—W. A. WRIGHT: Theobald's conjecture is certainly ingenious, and may be right. [It is an *emendatio certissima* to the present ED.]

1. THEOBALD (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 237) conjectured that the Fifth Act should begin here, and was the first to point out that the scene must be shifted from the Palace Wood to Athens.

4. **Staru.**] COLLIER: In the Ff, as in the Qq, there is some confusion of persons, owing, perhaps, to the actor of the part of Thisbe being called *This.* in the prefixes.

5. **tránsported**] STAUNTON: Or, as Snout expressed it when he first saw Bottom, adorned with an ass's head, *translated*, that is, *transformed*.—SCHMIDT (*Lex.*) in his third section of the meanings of this word, defines the present passage by 'to remove from this world to the next, to kill (euphemistically)'; and cites, in confirmation, *Meas. for Meas.* IV, iii, 72, where the Duke says of Barnardine 'to transport him in the mind he is were damnable.' Of course it would be temerarious to say outright that Schmidt is downright wrong, but I submit that it does not follow that a meaning which is appropriate in the Duke's mouth is appropriate in Starveling's. The presumption is strong that if 'transported' means *killed*, Starveling would not have used it. It is the mistakes of these rude mechanicals which, as Theseus says, we must take. Therefore, Starveling's 'transported' means Snout's 'translated,' which means our 'transformed.'—ED.

6. **This.**] EBSWORTH (*Introd. to Griggs's Roberts's Qto*, p. xi): The first error of the Qq was the omission to mark (not *Thisbie*, but) *Thisbie's mother;* a character that had been allotted to the timid Robin Starveling, although she does not speak when the Interlude is afterwards acted. Her part is dumb-show, and therefore especially suited to the nervous tailor, who fears his own voice and shadow.

Quin. It is not poſſible : you haue not a man in all *Athens*, able to diſcharge *Piramus* but he.

Thiſ. No, hee hath ſimply the beſt wit of any handy-craft man in *Athens*.

Quin. Yea, and the beſt perſon too, and hee is a very Paramour, for a ſweet voyce.

Thiſ. You muſt ſay, Paragon. A Paramour is (God bleſſe vs) a thing of nought.

Enter Snug the Ioyner.

Snug. Maſters, the Duke is comming from the Temple, and there is two or three Lords & Ladies more married : If our ſport had gone forward, we had all bin made men.

Thiſ. O ſweet bully *Bottome :* thus hath he loſt ſixepence a day, during his life; he could not haue ſcaped ſix-

12. Quin.] Snout. Phelps, Hal. White ii.
too] *to* Q_1.
14. Thiſ.] Quince. Phelps, Hal.
15. *nought*] *naught* Ff, Rowe, Theob. Han. Warb. Cap. Knt, Hal. Dyce, Sta. Cam. White ii.
16. the Ioyner] Om. Rowe et seq.
19. *bin*] *beene* Qq. *been* Ff.
22. *ſcaped*] *scraped* Grey.
22, 24, 25. *a day*] *a-day* Pope.

12. Quin.] PHELPS (ap. Halliwell) : We give this speech to Snout, who has otherwise nothing to say, and to whom it is much more appropriate than to Quince. Quince, the playwright, manager, and ballad-monger, himself corrects the pronunciation of Bottom in III, i. The next speech by Flute [line 14] should also, we think, be given to Quince, as the best informed of the party. [As far as *Snout* is concerned, R. G. WHITE, in his first edition, agreed with Phelps, and in his second edition followed him.]—EBSWORTH (*Introd. to Griggs's Roberts's Qto*, p. xii) : It is Flute who habitually mistakes his words (witness his repetition of 'Ninny's tomb,' despite the correction earlier administered to him by Quince). Therefore we may be sure that the awkward misreading of 'Paramour' for 'Paragon' comes from Flute, and not from the sensible manager, Quince. Can we restore the right [rubric in line 14]? It may have been either *Quince* or *Snout*, or even *Thisbie's Mother*, otherwise *Starveling*. Certainly not '*Thisbie*,' i. e. Flute.

14, 15. God blesse vs] See Staunton's note on III, ii, 419.

15. nought] W. A. WRIGHT : The two words, 'naught,' signifying worthlessness, good-for-nothingness, and 'nought,' nothing, are etymologically the same, but the different senses they have acquired are distinguished in the spelling.—M. MASON : The ejaculation 'God bless us!' proves that Flute imagined he was saying a naughty word [and that the true spelling here is *naught*].

18. there is two or three] For examples of 'there is' preceding a plural subject, see Shakespeare *passim*, or ABBOTT, § 335.

19. made men] JOHNSON : In the same sense as in *The Tempest*, II, ii, 31 : 'any strange beast there makes a man.'

pence a day. And the Duke had not giuen him ſixpence a day for playing *Piramus*, Ile be hang'd. He would haue deſerued it. Sixpence a day in *Piramus*, or nothing.

Enter Bottome.

Bot. Where are theſe Lads? Where are theſe hearts?

Quin. *Bottome*, ô moſt couragious day! O moſt happie houre!

Bot. Maſters, I am to diſcourſe wonders; but ask me not what. For if I tell you, I am no true *Athenian*. I will tell you euery thing as it fell out.

Qu. Let vs heare, ſweet *Bottome*.

Bot. Not a word of me: all that I will tell you, is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparell together, good

23. *And*] *An* Pope et seq.
25. *in* Piramus] *for Pyramus* Hal. conj.
27. *hearts*] *harts* Q_1.
28. Bottome,] *Bottom!*— Theob.
29. [All croud about him. Cap.
31. *no true*] *not true* Qq.
32. *thing as*] *thing right as* Qq, Cap. et seq. (subs.).
34. *all that*] *all* Rowe+.

25. **Sixpence a day**] STEEVENS: Shakespeare has already ridiculed the title-page of *Cambyses*, by Thomas Preston, and here he seems to allude to him or some other person who, like him, had been pensioned for his dramatic abilities. Preston acted a part in John Ritwise's play of *Dido* before Queen Elizabeth, at Cambridge, in 1564; and the Queen was so well pleased that she bestowed on him a pension of *twenty* pounds a year, which is little more than *a shilling a day*.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): This [sixpence] seems like a jest, but is not one. Sixpence sterling, in Shakespeare's time, was equal to about eighty-seven and a half cents now—no mean gratuitous addition to the daily wages of a weaver during life. See the following extract from a very able little tract on political economy: 'And ye know xii. d. a day now will not go so far as viii. pence would aforetime. . . . Also where xl. shillings a yere was honest wages for a yeoman afore this time, and xx. *pence a week borde wages* was sufficient, now double as much will skante beare their charge.'—*A Conceipt of English Pollicy*, 1581, fol. 33 b. [That any ridicule on Preston or on any one else was here cast by Shakespeare is, I think, extremely improbable. It is attributing too much intelligence to Shakespeare's audience on the one hand, and too little to Shakespeare on the other.—ED.]

28. **couragious**] W. A. WRIGHT: It is not worth while to guess what Quince intended to say. He used the first long word that occurred to him, without reference to its meaning; a practice which is not yet altogether extinct.

30. **I am to discourse**] For many examples of the various ellipses after *is*, see ABBOTT, § 405, where it is noted that 'we still retain an ellipsis of *under necessity* in the phrase, "I *am* (yet) to learn."—*Mer. of Ven.* I, i, 5. But we should not say: "That ancient Painter who *being* (under necessity) to represent the griefe of the by-standers," &c.—*Montaigne*, 3. We should rather translate literally from Montaigne: "Ayant à représenter." So Bottom says to his fellows: "I am (ready) to discourse," &c.'

ſtrings to your beards, new ribbands to your pumps, meete preſently at the Palace, euery man looke ore his part : for the ſhort and the long is, our play is preferred : In any caſe let *Thisby* haue cleane linnen : and let not him that playes the Lion, paire his nailes, for they ſhall hang out for the Lions clawes. And moſt deare Actors, eate no Onions, nor Garlicke ; for wee are to vtter ſweete breath, and I doe not doubt but to heare them ſay, it is a ſweet Comedy. No more words : away, go away.

Exeunt.

38. *preferred*] *preferd* Qq. *proffer'd* Theob. conj. (Nichols, ii, 237).

43. *doubt but to*] *doubt to* F_3F_4, Rowe+.

44. *ſweet*] *most sweet* Theob. ii, Warb. Johns.

44. *go away*] *go, away* Theob. i et seq. (subs.). *go; away* Coll. Dyce White.

45. Exeunt.] Om. Qq.

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36. **strings**] MALONE: That is, to prevent the false beards, which they were to wear, from falling off.—STEEVENS: I suspect that the 'good strings' were ornamental or employed to give an air of novelty to the countenances of the performers. [As the only authority given by Steevens to support his suspicion is where the Duke, in *Meas. for Meas.* IV, ii, 187, tells the Provost to shave the head of Barnardine, and 'tie the beard,' we may not unreasonably question his interpretation.—ED.]

38. **preferred**] THEOBALD: This word is not to be understood in its most common acceptation here, as if their play was chosen in *preference* to the others (for that appears afterwards not to be the fact), but means that it was given in among others for the duke's option. So in *Jul. Cæs.* III, i, 28: 'Let him go And presently prefer his suit to Cæsar.'—W. A. WRIGHT: That is, offered for acceptance; if Bottom's words have a meaning, which is not always certain.—F. A. MARSHALL queries if it has not more probably the sense of '*preferred* to the dignity (of being acted before the Duke).' [Assuredly no one can be accused of inordinate self-conceit who asks for an explanation of Bottom's phrases which were intelligible to Snug, Flute, and Snout.—ED.]

Actus Quintus. [*Scene I.*]

Enter Theſeus, Hippolita, Egeus and his Lords.

Hip. 'Tis ſtrange my *Theſeus*, ẏ theſe louers ſpeake of.
The. More ſtrange then true. I neuer may beleeue 4

1. Om. Qq. Act V, Sc. iii. Fleay. [The Palace. Theob. The Same. A State-Room in Theseus's Palace. Cap.

2. Egeus and his Lords.] and Philostrate. Qq.
Egeus] Egæus Ff (throughout).
3. ẏ] *what* Pope+.

3. ẏ] For examples of the omission of the relative, see Shakespeare *passim*, or ABBOTT, § 244; and see § 307 for examples of 'may' in the sense of *can*, as Theseus uses it the next line.

4–23. ROFFE (*Ghost Belief*, &c., p. 40): [In this speech every line] is sceptical, yet *the conduct* of the play falsifies the Duke's reasonings, or, as they should rather be called, his assertions. Hippolyta having observed to him, ''Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of,' he replies, *paying no attention*, be it observed, to the fact that Hippolyta is speaking from the testimony of four persons; a very artful stroke on the part of Shakespeare at the sceptics. To this speech [ll. 4–23] Hippolyta very justly answers that [ll. 24–28]. Here again Shakespeare shows his nice observation of the sceptical mind. Every one who has conversed on any subject with persons *predetermined, on that subject, not to believe*, must have observed how common it is for the latter, when fairly brought to a stand-still, to lapse into a dead silence, instead of saying, as the lover of truth would do, 'What you have alleged is very reasonable, and I will now examine.' *They* can say no more, nor may *you*. Accordingly, to the incontrovertible speech of Hippolyta, Theseus makes no reply. It is a truly noteworthy and significant fact that to the sceptical Theseus should have been allotted by Shakespeare the sceptical idea concerning the poet, namely, as being the embodier of the unreal, and not as being the copyist of what is true. It is exactly in character that the doubting Theseus should thus speak of the poetic art, and *thence we may be sure that the poet who wrote the lines for him, thought precisely the very reverse*. Owing, however, to the general doubt concerning the supernatural, and the consequent assumption of Shakespeare's disbelief [in it], this point seems never to have been considered, and it may be safely affirmed that nine hundred and ninety-nine readers out of every thousand would gravely quote the lines upon the poet *as containing Shakespeare's own idea*, although, only five lines previously, *Theseus has placed the poet in the same category with the lunatic*. From the purely dramatic character of his works, Shakespeare can never *speak* in his own person, but he can always *act*; that is, so frame his story as that scepticism shall be shown to be entirely at fault. [Be it observed that the essay, privately printed in 1851, from which the foregoing is extracted, was written on the assumption that 'ghost-belief, rightly understood, is most rational and salutary,' and that 'the ghost-believing student' will deem that 'it must have had the sanction of such a thinker as Shakespeare.'—ED.]—JULIA WEDGWOOD (*Contemporary Rev.* Apr. 1890, p. 583): In the attitude of Theseus

Theſe anticke fables, nor theſe Fairy toyes,
Louers and mad men haue ſuch ſeething braines,
Such ſhaping phantaſies, that apprehend more
Then coole reaſon euer comprehends.
The Lunaticke, the Louer, and the Poet,
Are of imagination all compact.
One ſees more diuels then vaſte hell can hold;
That is the mad man. The Louer, all as franticke,
Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Egipt.*

5. *anticke*] *antique* Q_1, Cap. Dyce, Sta. Cam. White ii. *antick* F_3F_4, Rowe+. *antic* Coll. Hal. White i, Ktly.

7. *more*] Transposed, to begin the next line, Theob. et seq.

8–10. Two lines, ending *lunatick*... *compact.* Q_1.

8. *coole*] *cooler* Pope.

12. *That is the mad man*] *The mad-man. While* Pope+. *That is, the mad-man* Cap. et seq.

13. Egipt] *Ægypt* Q_1.

towards the supernatural there is something essentially modern. It is very much in the manner of Scott, or rather, there is something in it that reminds one of Scott himself. . . . Scott thought that any contemporary who believed himself to have seen a ghost must be insane; yet when he paints the appearance of the grey spectre to Fergus MacIvor, or, what seems to us his most effective introduction of the supernatural, that of Alice to the Master of Ravenswood, we feel that something within him believes in the possibility of that which he paints, and that this something is deeper than his denial, though that be expressed with all the force of his logical intellect. . . . Theseus explaining away the magic of the night is Scott himself when he drew Dousterswivel, or when he describes the Antiquary scoffing at a significant dream. . . . To paint [the supernatural] most effectually it should not be quite consistently either disbelieved or believed. Perhaps Shakespeare was much nearer an actual belief in the fairy mythology he has half created than seems possible to a spectator of the nineteenth century. And yet Theseus expresses exactly the denial of the modern world. And we feel at once how the introduction of such an element enhances the power of the earlier views; the courteous, kindly, man-of-the-world scepticism somehow brings out the sphere of magic against which it sets the shadow of its demand. The belief of the peasant is emphasised and defined, while it is also intensified by what we feel the inadequate confutation of the prince.

6, &c. SIGISMUND ('Uebereinstimmendes zwischen Sh. und Plutarch,' *Sh. Jahrbuch*, xviii, p. 170) refers to the 'noteworthy' correspondence between this passage and the comparison of love to madness in Plutarch's *Morals*, where the resemblance, as he thinks, is too marked to be overlooked.

6. **seething**] STEEVENS: So in *The Temp.* V, i, 59: 'thy brains, Now useless, boil'd within thy skull.'—MALONE: So also in *Wint. Tale*, III, iii, 64: 'Would any but these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather?'—DELIUS: See also *Macbeth*, II, i, 39: 'A false creation, Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.'

11. **One sees**, &c.] For Chalmers's theory that in this line there is a sarcasm on Lodge's *Wits Miserie*, see Appendix, *Date of Composition.*

The Poets eye in a fine frenzy rolling, doth glance
From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen.
And as imagination bodies forth the forms of things
Vnknowne; the Poets pen turnes them to ſhapes,
And giues to aire nothing, a locall habitation,
And a name. Such tricks hath ſtrong imagination,
That if it would but apprehend ſome ioy,
It comprehends ſome bringer of that ioy.
Or in the night, imagining ſome feare,
How eaſie is a buſh ſuppos'd a Beare?
Hip. But all the ſtorie of the night told ouer,
And all their minds transfigur'd ſo together,
More witneſſeth than fancies images,
And growes to ſomething of great conſtancie;

14. *frenzy rolling,*] *frenzy, rolling,* Q_1.
14, 15. *doth glance...to heauen*] One line, Rowe et seq.
15, 16. *From...And as*] One line, Q_1.
16–19. Lines end *forth...pen...nothing ...name...imagination.* Rowe ii et seq.
17. *Vnknowne;*] *unknown,* Pope et seq.
17. *ſhapes*] *shape* Pope+, Dyce ii, iii.
18. *aire*] F_3. *ayery* Q_1. *ayre* F_2. *air* F_4. *aiery* Pope+. *airy* Q_2, Rowe et cet.
20. *it would*] *he would* Rowe ii, Pope, Theob.
22. *Or*] *So* Han. *For* Anon. ap. Cam.

13. **Egipt**] STEEVENS: By 'a brow of Egypt' Shakespeare means no more than the *brow of a gypsy.*

18. **aire**] An instance, cited by WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 48), of the confusion of *e* and *ie* final.

22, 23. R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Who can believe that these two lines are genuine? . . . The two preceding lines are doubtless genuine. They close the speech appropriately with a clear and conclusive distinction between the apprehensive and the comprehensive power of the imaginative mind. Where, indeed, in the whole range of metaphysical writing is the difference between the two so accurately stated and so forcibly illustrated? And would Shakespeare, after thus reaching the climax of his thought, fall a twaddling about bushes and bears? Note, too, the loss of dignity in the rhythm. I cannot even bring myself to doubt that these lines are interpolated. [This last sentence White repeats in his second edition.]—The COWDEN-CLARKES: This concluding couplet, superficially considered, has an odd, bald, flat effect, as of an anti-climax, after the magnificent diction in the previous lines of the speech; but viewed dramatically they serve to give character and naturalness to the dialogue. The speaker is carried away by the impulse of his thought and nature of his subject into lofty expression, ranging somewhat apart from the matter in hand; then, feeling this, he brings back the conversation to the point of last night's visions and the lovers' related adventures by the two lines in question.

22. **imagining**] That is, if one imagines; for examples of participles without nouns, see ABBOTT, § 378.

27. **constancie**] JOHNSON: Consistency, stability, certainty.

But howſoeuer, ſtrange, and admirable.

Enter louers, Lyſander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.

The. Heere come the louers, full of ioy and mirth:
Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and freſh dayes
Of loue accompany your hearts.
Lyſ. More then to vs, waite in your royall walkes, your boord, your bed.
The. Come now, what maskes, what dances ſhall we haue,
To weare away this long age of three houres,
Between our after ſupper, and bed-time?
Where is our vſuall manager of mirth?
What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,
To eaſe the anguiſh of a torturing houre?
Call *Egeus*

28. *But*] *Be't* Han.
32, 33 *Ioy... Of loue*] One line, Ff, Rowe et seq.
34, 35. *waite...bed*] One line, Ff, Rowe et seq.
34. *waite in*] *wait on* Rowe+, Cap.
38–43. Four lines, ending *betweene...manager...play*...Philoſtrate. Q_1.
39. *our after*] *or after* Qq. *after ſupper*] *after-supper* F_4, Rowe et seq.
43. Egeus.] Philoſtrate. Qq, Pope et seq. [Enter Philostrate. Pope+.

28. **howsoeuer**] ABBOTT, § 47: For 'howsoe'er it be,' 'in any case.'

28. **strange**] The COWDEN-CLARKES: Shakespeare uses this word with forcible and extensive meaning. Here, and in the opening lines of the scene, he uses it for *marvellous, out of nature, anomalous.* See also line 66, below.

28. **admirable**] That is, to be wondered at.

39. **after supper**] STAUNTON: The accepted explanation of an 'after-supper' conveys but an imperfect idea of what this refection really was. '*A rere-supper*,' says Nares, 'seems to have been a late or second supper.' Not exactly. The *rere-supper* was to the supper itself what the *rere-banquet* was to the dinner—*a dessert.* On ordinary occasions the gentlemen of Shakespeare's age appear to have dined about eleven o'clock, and then to have retired either to a garden-house or other suitable apartment and enjoyed their *rere-banquet* or dessert. Supper was usually served between five and six; and this, like the dinner, was frequently followed by a collation consisting of fruits and sweetmeats, called, in this country, the *rere-supper;* in Italy, Pocenio, from the Latin *Pocoenium.*

43. **Egeus**] CAPELL (p. 115 *b*): The player editors' error in making Egeus enterer in an act he has no concern in, arose (probably) from their laying Philostrate's character in this act upon the player who had finished that of Egeus. [Which is another proof that the Folio was printed from a prompter's copy. The Qq here have, correctly, Philostrate, who was the master of the revels; and so, too, has the Folio, at

Ege. Heere mighty *Theſeus.*

The. Say, what abridgement haue you for this eue- 45
ning?
What maske? What muſicke? How ſhall we beguile
The lazie time, if not with ſome delight?

Ege. There is a breefe how many ſports are rife: 49

44, 49, 68, 79. Ege.] Philoſtrate Q_1. Philo. Q_2.

44. Theſeus.] *Theseus, here* Han.

49. *There*] *Here* Anon. ap. Hal.
rife] *ripe* Q_1, Theob.+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. Ktly.

49. *breefe*] *briefe* QqF_2. *brief* F_3F_4. [presenting a Paper. Cap. Giving a paper which Theseus hands to Lysander to read. Hal.

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line 84,—an oversight on the part of the prompter who adapted for the stage the copy of Q_2 from which the Folio was subsequently printed.—ED.]

45. **abridgement**] STEEVENS: By 'abridgement' our author may mean a dramatic performance, which crowds the events of years into a few hours. It may be worth while to observe that in the North the word *abatement* had the same meaning as *diversion* or *amusement*. So in the Prologue to the Fifth book of Gawin Douglas's version of the Æneid: 'Ful mony myrry abaytmentis followis heir.'—HENLEY: Does not 'abridgement,' in the present instance, signify amusement to beguile the tediousness of the evening? or, in one word, *pastime?*—W. A. WRIGHT: An entertainment to make the time pass quickly. Used in *Hamlet*, II, ii, 439, in a double sense, the entry of the players cutting short Hamlet's talk: 'look, where my abridgement comes.' In Steevens's quotation from Gawin Douglas, 'abaytment' is clearly the same as the French 'esbatement,' which Cotgrave defines, 'A sporting, playing, dallying, ieasting, recreation.'—[In an article on the etymology of the word 'merry,' ZUPITZA (*Englische Studien*, 1885, vol. 8, p. 471) shows that this word originally bore the meaning of *short* (like Old High German *murg*), and thence followed the meaning of *that which makes the time seem short;* that is, *pleasant, agreeable, entertaining, delightful.* Hence by a parallel process 'abridgement' is used thus poetically by Shakespeare in [the present passage] as that which abridges time—namely, *pastime, diversion, amusement.* 'With this poetic use of "abridgement," Vigfusson (*Sturlunga saga*, Oxford, 1878, i, Note xxiii) compares the Old Norse *skemtan* and *skemta*. The noun *skemtan* means entertainment, pastime, especially the entertainment derived from telling stories; the verb *skemta* means to entertain, to pass the time. The Danish thus use *skjemt*, a joke, fun; *skjemte*, to joke, to amuse, &c. The etymon of the words is Old Norse—*skammr*, short. . . . There is a development of the same idea in Scotch, as was observed long ago by Jamieson, which corresponds to Shakespeare's "abridgement"; we find in the Scotch the word *schorte* or *short*, equivalent to entertain, to pass the time; and *schortsum* or *shortsum*, meaning cheerful, merry. . . . In fine, the signification of *merry* does not debar us from referring it to the Gothic *gamaurgian*, to shorten, and Old High German *murg*, short, inasmuch as the Old Norse *skemtan* and *skemta* from *skammr*, and the Scotch *schorte* and *schortsum*, reveal a corresponding development of meaning, and Shakespeare uses "abridgement" in the sense of amusement, pastime, diversion.' For the reference to this article by Dr. Zupitza, I am indebted to the learning and courtesy of Prof. Dr. J. W. BRIGHT of the Johns Hopkins University.—ED.]

Make choiſe of which your Highneſſe will ſee firſt.
Lif. The battell with the Centaurs to be ſung
By an Athenian Eunuch, to the Harpe.
The. Wee'l none of that. That haue I told my Loue
In glory of my kinſman Hercules.
Lif. The riot of the tipſie Bachanals,
Tearing the Thracian ſinger, in their rage?

51. Lif.] Ff, Rowe, Pope. The. or Thef. Qq, Cap. Lys. [reads] Knt, Hal. White i, Sta. Thes. [reads] Theob. et cet.
51–67. Given to Theseus. Qq, Theob.+, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, Cam. White ii.
51. *Centaurs*] *Centaur* F_4, Rowe i.
52. *Harpe.*] *Harpe?* Q_1.
53. *haue I*] *I haue* Theob. Warb. Johns.
55, 59, 63. [Reads. Han. Dyce, Cam.
56. *Thracian*] *Thraſian* F_3F_4.
rage?] *rage.* F_4 et seq.

49. **breefe**] STEEVENS: That is, a short account or enumeration.

49. **rife**] THEOBALD corrected this manifest misprint, but STEEVENS dallied with it by citing examples from Sidney and from Gosson of its use (which is beside the mark. Does any question that 'rife' is a good word in its proper place?), and HALLIWELL retained it and sustained it. *Ripe*, of course, means ready.—ED.

51. **Lis.**] THEOBALD: What has Lysander to do in the affair? He is no courtier of Theseus's, but only an occasional guest, and just come out of the woods, so not likely to know what sports were in preparation. I have taken the old Qq. for my guides. Theseus reads the titles of the sports out of the list, and then alternately makes his remarks upon them.—KNIGHT: The lines are generally printed as in the Qq, but the division of so long a passage is clearly better, and is perfectly natural and proper. 'And the dignity of the monarch,' adds HALLIWELL, 'is better sustained by this arrangement.'—WHITE (ed. i): It seems natural that, under the circumstances, a sovereign should hand such a paper to some one else to read aloud. [In his second edition White follows the Qq.]—F. A. MARSHALL: The arrangement in the Ff is much more effective as far as the stage requirements are concerned.—COLLIER: The more natural course seems to be for Theseus both to read and comment. [We have had so many proofs that F_1 was printed from a stage-copy that, I think, it is safest to follow it here.—ED.]

51. **Centaurs**] This, and the reference to Orpheus in line 56, are among the many proofs collected by WALKER (*Crit.* i, 152) of Ovid's influence on Shakespeare. The story of the Centaurs is in Book xii of the *Metamorphoses*, and of the 'Thracian singer' in Book xi.

52. **Harpe**] HALLIWELL: It is a singular circumstance that the harp is not found in any of the known relics of the ancient Greeks, so that the poet has probably unwittingly fallen into an anachronism.

54. **Hercules**] KNIGHT: Shakespeare has given to Theseus the attributes of a real hero, amongst which modesty is included. He has attributed the glory to his 'kinsman Hercules.' The poets and sculptors of antiquity have made Theseus himself the great object of their glorification.—W. A. WRIGHT: The version by Theseus was different from that told by Nestor; the latter, in Ovid, purposely omitted all mention of Hercules.

The. That is an old deuice, and it was plaid
When I from *Thebes* came laſt a Conqueror.
Lif. The thrice three Muſes, mourning for the death
of learning, late deceaſt in beggerie.
The. That is ſome Satire keene and criticall,
Not ſorting with a nuptiall ceremonie.
Lif. A tedious breefe Scene of yong *Piramus*,
And his loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth.
The. Merry and tragicall? Tedious, and briefe? That
is, hot ice, and wondrous ſtrange ſnow. How ſhall wee
finde the concord of this diſcord?

60. *of*] *Of* Qq, Pope et seq.
beggerie.] *beggery?* Q_2.
64. *mirth*] *mirth?* Qq.
65–67. Prose, Q_2Ff. Three lines, ending *ice...concord...diſcord.* Q_1. Three lines, ending *briefe...ſnow...diſcord.* Theob. et seq.
65, 66. *That.../now*] Om. Pope.
66. *ice*] *Iſe* Q_2.
and wondrous ſtrange ſnow] Qq Ff, Rowe, Theob. i, Coll. i, Hal. White i, Sta. Dyce iii. *and wonderous strange snow* Theob. ii. *and wondrous scorching snow* Han. *a wondrous strange shew* Warb. *and wondrous strange black snow* Upton, Cap. *and wondrous seething snow* Coll. ii, iii (MS). *and wondrous swarthy snow* Sta. conj. Dyce ii. *and wondrous swarte snow* Sta. conj. Kinnear. *and wondrous sable snow* Bailey, Ktly, Elze. *and wondrous orange* (or *raven*, or *azure*) *snow* Bailey. *and wondrous strange in hue* Bulloch. *and wondrous sooty snow* Herr. *and wind-restraining snow* Wetherell (*Athen.* 2 Nov.'67). *and ponderous flakes of snow* Leo (*Athen.* 27 Nov. '80). *and wondrous flakes of snow* Ibid. *and wondrous staining snow* Nicholson (ap. Cam.). *and wondrous flaming snow* Joicey (*N. & Qu.* 11 Feb.'93). *and wondrous fiery snow* Orger. *and wondrous scaldinge snow* Ebsworth.
66. *wondrous*] *wodrous* Q_2. *wonderous* Theob. ii, Johns. Steev. Rann, Mal. Var. Knt, Dyce i, White ii.

59, 60. For the various references supposed to be lying concealed in these lines, see Appendix, *Date of Composition.*

62. ceremonie] This example may be added to the many collected by WALKER (*Crit.* ii, 73) of the trisyllabic pronunciation of *ceremony.*—ED.

63. Piramus] For Golding's translation of this story from Ovid, see Appendix, *Source of the Plot.*

66. hot ice, . . . snow] STEEVENS: The meaning of the line is 'hot ice, and *snow* of as strange a quality.'—M. MASON: As there is no antithesis between 'strange' and 'snow' as there is between 'hot' and 'ice,' I believe we should read, 'and wonderous *strong* snow.'—KNIGHT: Surely, snow is a *common* thing, and, therefore, 'wonderous strange' is sufficiently antithetical—'hot ice, and snow as strange.' —HALLIWELL: In other words, ice and snow, wonderous hot and wonderous strange; or hot ice, and strange snow as wonderful.—COLLIER (ed. ii): The MS has fortunately supplied us with what must have been the language of the poet—'and wondrous *seething* snow.' *Seething* is boiling, as we have already seen at the beginning of this act; and *seething* and 'snow' are directly opposed to each other, like 'hot' and 'ice.' Thus metre and meaning are both restored, and it is not difficult to see

Ege. A play there is, my Lord, ſome ten words long,
Which is as breefe, as I haue knowne a play;
But by ten words, my Lord, it is too long;
Which makes it tedious. For in all the play,
There is not one word apt, one Player fitted.
And tragicall my noble Lord it is: for *Piramus*
Therein doth kill himſelfe. Which when I ſaw
Rehearſt, I muſt confeſſe, made mine eyes water:
But more merrie teares, the paſſion of loud laughter
Neuer ſhed.
Theſ. What are they that do play it?

68. *there is*] *it is* Han. Cap. Dyce ii, iii, Coll. iii. *this is* Coll. ii (MS).

73, 77. Lines end, *it is...himſelfe... confeſſe...teares...ſhed.* Ff, Rowe et seq.

74. *I ſaw*] *I saw't* Han.

how the misprint occurred. Here again the corr. fo., 1632, has been of most essential service.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Collier's MS emendation seems preferable to all the others, but there is hardly sufficient ground for making so great a change in a word which is found in the Qq and Ff.—STAUNTON: Upton's '*black* snow' comes nearest to the sense demanded, but 'strange' could hardly have been a misprint for *black*. Perhaps we should read '*swarthy* snow.' *Swarte*, as formerly spelt, is not so far removed from the text as *black*, *scorching*, or *seething*.—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 51): Perhaps *scorching* [Hanmer's] might serve as a bad makeshift.—BAILEY'S prismatic conjectures (*The Text*, &c. i, 196) were suggested by the colours of the polar snow as described by Arctic voyagers.—PERRING (p. 116): The word, which has no doubt been lost in transcription, was probably a very small one, perhaps with letters or a sound corresponding to the termination of the word preceding it. The final letters of 'strange' are *ge;* what word more fully and fairly satisfies the conditions required than the little word *jet*, used by Shakespeare in *2 Hen. VI:* II, i, in three consecutive lines? Perhaps, however, it would be too much to expect editors boldly to print 'and, wondrous strange! jet snow.'—R. G. WHITE (ed. ii): The original text is unsatisfactory, but not surely corrupt.—The COWDEN-CLARKES: 'Strange,' as Shakespeare occasionally uses it (in the sense of *anomalous*, *unnatural*, *prodigious*), presents sufficient image of contrast in itself. See note on line 28, above. [Surely there is no need of change. The mere fact that any child can suggest an appropriate adjective is a reason all-sufficient for retaining Shakespeare's word, especially when that word bears the meaning given to it by the Cowden-Clarkes.—ED.]

68. there is] COLLIER (ed. ii): We need not hesitate here to receive *this* for 'there' of the old copies. Philostrate evidently speaks of the particular play of Pyramus and Thisbe, which is 'some ten words long.'—DYCE (ed. ii): Collier's MS correction, *this*, is objectionable on account of the 'this' immediately above.

78. play it] SCHMIDT (*Programm*, p. 7) finds in these lines two difficulties which could not have been in the original MS. The first is the incomplete verse of line 78, and the second is the blunt answer which, so he says, no Englishman would ever think of giving to a prince. He, therefore, thus emends: 'What are they that do *play't?* Hard-handed men, | *My noble Lord* (or *My gracious Duke*) that work in Athens here.'

Ege. Hard handed men, that worke in Athens heere,
Which neuer labour'd in their mindes till now;
And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories
With this ſame play, againſt your nuptiall.
The. And we will heare it.
Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnleſſe you can finde ſport in their intents,
Extreamely ſtretcht, and cond with cruell paine,

82. *nuptiall'*] *nuptialls* Ff, Rowe+. et seq.
84, 85. *it is...ouer*] One line, Rowe ii 86, 87. Transpose, Gould.

81. **vnbreathed**] STEEVENS: That is, unexercised, unpractised.

82. **nuptiall**] W. A. WRIGHT: With only two exceptions Shakespeare always uses the singular form of this word [viz. in *Othello*, II, ii. 9, where the Ff have 'nup tiall' and the Qq 'nuptialls'; and *Per.* V, iii, 80].

86. **intents**] JOHNSON: As I know not what it is to 'stretch' and 'con' an 'intent,' I suspect a line to be lost.—KENRICK (*Rev.* 19): By 'intents' is plainly meant the design or scheme of the piece intended for representation; the conceit of which being far-fetched or improbable, it might be with propriety enough called 'extremely stretched.' As to this scheme or design being 'conn'd' (if any objection be made to the supposition of its having been written, *penn'd*), it is no wonder such players as these are represented to be 'should *con* their several parts with cruel pain.' —DOUCE (i, 196): It is surely not the 'intents' that are 'stretched and conn'd,' but the *play*, of which Philostrate is speaking. If the line 86 ('Unlesse you can,' &c.) were printed in a parenthesis all would be right.—KNIGHT and DELIUS follow Douce's suggestion, the former exactly, the latter, Delius, substituting commas for the marks of parenthesis.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): 'Intents' here, as the subject of the two verbs, 'stretched' and 'conn'd,' is used both for *endeavour* and for *the object of endeavour*, by a license which other writers than Shakespeare have assumed.—DANIEL (p. 35): Qy. arrange and read thus: 'No, my noble lord, it is not for you, | Unless you can find sport in their intents | To do you service. I have heard it *o'er*, | And it is nothing, nothing in the world, | Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain.' [To me, Grant White's is the right interpretation, and renders any change unnecessary. Is it any more violent to say that my intents, my endeavors, to do you service shall be stretched to my utmost ability, than it is to say, as Antonio says in *The Mer. of Ven.*, that 'my credit [for your sake] shall be rack'd to the uttermost'? —ED.]

87. **stretcht**] ULRICI (Ed. *Deut. Sh. Gesellschaft*, trans. by Dr A. Schmidt, p. 428): I cannot avoid the conclusion that there is here a misprint, albeit no objection to the phrase has hitherto been made. 'Extremely stretch'd' can by no means apply to the 'tedious brief scene' which the rude mechanicals are to perform; their 'merry tragedy,' on the contrary, is 'extremely' short. Wherefore I believe that the phrase originally stood, in Shakespeare's handwriting, not 'extremely stretch'd,' but 'extremely *wretch'd*.' [Shall we not all fervently thank the Goodness and the Grace that on our birth has smiled, and permitted us to read Shakespeare as an inheritance,

To doe you ſeruice. 88
Theſ. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
Can be amiſſe, when ſimpleneſſe and duty tender it. 90
Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

89, 90. *For...it*] Two lines, ending *amiſſe...it* Rowe ii et seq.
90, 93. *duty*] *duety* Q_1.
91. [Exit Phil. Pope.

instead of having to look at him through a medium which presents fantastic distortions? Let the grateful English-speaking reader consider for a moment what would be his enjoyment of Shakespeare were he to read his verses stript of all charm of melody, of humour, and sometimes even of sense. What a tribute it is to the intelligence of our German brothers that under such disadvantages they have done what they have done!—ED.]

87. cruell] HALLIWELL quotes from an anonymous writer the remark that '*cruel*, among the Devonshire peasantry, is synonymous with *monstrous* in fashionable circles. The person whom the latter would denominate monstrous handsome, monstrous kind, or monstrous good-tempered, the other will style, with equal propriety, cruel handsome, cruel kind, or cruel good-tempered. The word, however, was formerly in more general use to signify anything in a superlative degree.' [It is not at all likely that this Devonshire use rules here; 'cruel' has here its ordinary meaning.—ED.]

89, 90. For never, &c.] STEEVENS: Ben Jonson, in *Cynthia's Revels* [V, iii], has employed this sentiment of humanity on the same occasion, when Cynthia is preparing to see a masque: 'Nothing which duty and desire to please, Bears written in the forehead, comes amiss.'

91, &c. JULIA WEDGWOOD (*Contemporary Rev.* Apr. '90, p. 584): The play of the tradesmen, which at first one is apt to regard as a somewhat irrelevant appendix to the rest of the drama, is seen, by a maturer judgement, to be, as it were, a piece of sombre tapestry, exactly adapted to form a background to the light forms and iridescent colouring of the fairies as they flit before it. But this is not its greatest interest to our mind. It is most instructive when we watch the proof it gives of Shakespeare's strong interest in his own art. It is one of three occasions in which he introduces a play within a play, and in all three the introduction, without being unnatural, has just that touch of unnecessariness by means of which the productions of art take a biographic tinge, and seem as much a confidence as a creation. How often must Shakespeare have watched some player of an heroic part proclaim his own prosaic personality, like Snug, the joiner, letting his face be seen through the lion's head! . . . In the speech of Theseus, ordering the play, we may surely allow ourselves to believe that we hear not only the music, but the voice of Shakespeare, pleading the cause of patient effort against the scorn of a hard and narrow dilettantism. . . . 'This is the silliest stuff I ever heard,' says Hippolyta, and Theseus's answer, while it calls up deeper echoes, is full of the pathos that belongs to latent memories. 'The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.' Here the poet is speaking to the audience; in Hamlet, when he addresses the players, his sympathy naturally takes the form of criticism; what the Athenian prince would excuse the Danish prince would amend. But in both alike we discern the same personal interest in the actor's part, and we learn that the greatest genius who ever lived was one who could show most sympathy with incompleteness and failure.

Hip. I loue not to ſee wretchedneſſe orecharged; 92
And duty in his ſeruice periſhing.
Thef. Why gentle ſweet, you ſhall ſee no ſuch thing.
Hip. He ſaies, they can doe nothing in this kinde. 95
Thef. The kinder we, to giue them thanks for nothing
Our ſport ſhall be, to take what they miſtake;
And what poore duty cannot doe, noble reſpect
Takes it in might, not merit. 99

92. *orecharged*] *o'ercharg'd* Rowe et seq.
97. */port*] *sports* Steev.'85.
98. *poore duty*] *poor* (*willing*) *duty* Theob. Han. Warb. Cap. Dyce ii, iii, Coll. iii (subs.). *poor faltering duty* Ktly. *poor duty meaning* Spedding (ap. Cam.).
cannot doe] *cannot aptly do* Bailey, Schmidt. *cannot nobly do* Wagner. *can but poorly do* Tiessen.
98, 99. *noble...merit*] One line, Theob. et seq. (except Sta. Cam. White ii). *respect Takes it in noble might, not noble merit.* Bulloch.
99. *might*] *mind* Bailey, Spedding (ap. Cam.).

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97. **Our sport**, &c.] EDINBURGH MAGA. (Nov. 1786): That is, We will accept with pleasure even their blundering attempts. [Quoted by Steevens.]

98, 99. **And what**, &c.] JOHNSON: The sense of this passage as it now stands, if it has any sense, is this: What the inability of duty cannot perform, regardful generosity receives as an act of ability, though not of merit. The contrary is rather true: What dutifulness tries to perform without ability, regardful generosity receives as having the merit, though not the power, of complete performance. We should therefore read 'takes not in might, but merit.'—STEEVENS: 'In *might*' is, perhaps, an elliptical expression for *what might have been*.—HEATH (p. 58): Whatever failure there may be in the performance attempted by poor willing duty, the regard of a noble mind accepts it in proportion to the ability, not to the real merit.—KENRICK (p. 21): That is, in consequence of 'poor duty's' inability, taking the will for the deed, viz. accepting the best in its *might* to do for the best that might be done; rating the merit of the deed itself as nothing, agreeable to the first line of Theseus's speech, 'The kinder we to give them thanks for *nothing*.'—COLERIDGE (p. 103), referring to Theobald's insertion, for the sake of rhythm, of *willing* before 'duty,' says, 'to my ears it would read far more Shakespearian thus: 'what poor duty cannot do, *yet would*, Noble,' &c.—ABBOTT, § 510, evidently unwitting that he had been anticipated by both Johnson and Coleridge, says: 'I feel confident that *but would* must be supplied, and we must read: "what poor duty cannot do, *but would*, Noble respect takes *not* in might *but* merit." '—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 51): Something evidently has dropped out. [HALLIWELL quotes 'another editor' as proposing to read: 'what poor duty *would*, *but* cannot do.' This is practically the same as Coleridge's emendation, but who this 'other editor' is I do not know, and he is apparently unknown to the Cam. Ed. In the textual notes of that edition this emendation is given as 'quoted by Halliwell.'—F. A. MARSHALL adopted it.—ED.] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): The only objection to Theobald's *willing* before 'duty' is that *simple*, *eager*, *struggling*, or one of many other disyllabic words might be inserted with equal propriety.—W. A. WRIGHT: There is no need for change; the sense being, noble respect or consideration accepts the effort to please without regard to the merit of the performance. Compare *Love's*

Where I haue come, great Clearkes haue purpoſed
To greete me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I haue ſeene them ſhiuer and looke pale,
Make periods in the midſt of ſentences,
Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,
And in concluſion, dumbly haue broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Truſt me ſweete,
Out of this ſilence yet, I pickt a welcome:
And in the modeſty of fearefull duty,
I read as much, as from the ratling tongue
Of ſaucy and audacious eloquence.
Loue therefore, and tongue-tide ſimplicity,
In leaſt, ſpeake moſt, to my capacity.
Egeus. So pleaſe your Grace, the Prologue is addreſt.

100. *Clearkes*] *Clerkes* Q_1.
102. *Where*] *When* Han. Dyce ii, iii.
105. *haue*] *th' ave* White i conj.
107. *ſilence yet,*] Q_2Ff. *ſilence, yet,* Q_1, Cap.
112. [Enter Philomon. Pope. Re-enter Philostrate. Cap. et seq. (subs.).
113. Egeus.] Philoſt. Qq. Phil. Pope.
your] *you* Pope i.

Lab. L. V, ii, 517: 'That sport best pleases that doth least know how,' &c. [The difficulty here has arisen, I think, in taking 'might' in the sense of *power, ability*, rather than in the sense of *will;* Kenrick states the meaning concisely when he says it is about the same as taking 'the will for the deed.'—ED.]

100. **Clearkes**] BLAKEWAY: An allusion, I think, to what happened at Warwick, where the recorder, being to address the Queen, was so confounded by the dignity of her presence as to be unable to proceed with his speech. I think it was in Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth* that I read this circumstance, and I have also read that her Majesty was very well pleased when such a thing happened. It was, therefore, a very delicate way of flattering her to introduce it as Shakespeare has done here.—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 51) calls attention to a parallel passage in Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, B. ii, Song i, but as *Brittania's Pastorals* were not published until 1613, they are not of the highest moment in illustrating this present play. It is more to the point to cite, as MALONE cites, 'Deep clerks she dumbs.'—*Pericles*, V, Prologue 5.

105. **haue**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): As 'have' has no nominative except 'I,' three lines above, it may be a misprint for *th' ave;* but it is far more probable that *they* is understood; for such license was common in Shakespeare's day, or rather, it was hardly license then.

112. It is noteworthy, as tending to show the futility of almost all collation beyond that of specified copies, even in the case of modern editions, that the CAM. ED. here records 'Enter Philostrate. Pope (ed. 2). Enter Philomon. Pope (ed. 1).' In my copies of the first and second editions of Pope, it is 'Enter Philomon' in both instances.—ED.

113. **addrest**] STEEVENS: That is, ready.

Duke. Let him approach. *Flor. Trum.*

Enter the Prologue. *Quince.*

Pro. If we offend, it is with our good will.

114. Flor. Trum.] Om. Qq.
Pyramus and Thisbe. An Interlude. Cap.
Scene II. Pope+.

115. Enter...] Enter Quince for the prologue. Rowe.
Quince] Om. Qq.

114, 220, 224, &c. **Duke**] See FLEAY, line 417, below.

114. **Flor. Trum.**] STEEVENS: It appears from Dekker's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609 [chap. vi, p. 250, ed. Grosart], that the prologue was anciently ushered in by trumpets. 'Present not your selfe on the Stage (especially at a new play) vntill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got culor into his cheekes, and is ready to giue the trumpets their Cue, that hees vpon point to enter.'

115. **Enter the Prologue**] MALONE (*Hist. of Eng. Stage*, Var. 1821, vol. iii, 115): The person who spoke the prologue, who entered immediately after the third sounding, usually wore a long black velvet cloak, which, I suppose, was best suited to a supplicatory address. Of this custom, whatever may have been its origin, some traces remained until very lately; a black coat having been, if I mistake not, within these few years, the constant stage-habiliment of our modern prologue-speakers. The complete dress of the ancient prologue-speaker is still retained in the play exhibited in *Hamlet*, before the king and court of Denmark.—COLLIER (*Dram. Hist.* iii, 245, ed. ii): In the earlier period of our drama the prologue-speaker was either the author in person or his representative. . . . From the Prologue to Beaumont & Fletcher's *Woman Hater*, 1607, we learn that it was, even at that date, customary for the person who delivered that portion of the performance to be furnished with a garland of bay, as well as with a black velvet cloak. . . . The bay was the emblem of authorship, and the use of this arose out of the custom for the author, or a person representing him, to speak the prologue. The almost constant practice for the prologue-speaker to be dressed in a black cloak or in black, perhaps, had the same origin. [In the light of this statement by Collier, the appearance here in the Folio of 'Quince' is noteworthy as an indication that the Duke was to accept Quince as the author of the play.—ED.] KNIGHT (*Introd.* p. 331): One thing is perfectly clear to us—that the original of these editions [the two Quartos], whichever it might be, was printed from a genuine copy and carefully superintended through the press. The text appears to us as perfect as it is possible to be, considering the state of typography in that day. There is one remarkable evidence of this. The prologue to the interlude of the Clowns is purposely made inaccurate in its punctuation throughout. . . . It was impossible to have effected the object better than by the punctuation of Roberts's edition [Q_2]; and this is precisely one of those matters of nicety in which a printer would have failed, unless he had followed an extremely clear copy or his proofs had been corrected by an author or an editor.

116–125. CAPELL: In this prologue a gentle rub upon players (country ones, we'll suppose) seems to have been intended; whose deep knowledge of what is rehears'd by them is most curiously mark'd in the pointing of this prologue; upon which must have been taken some pains by the poet himself when it pass'd the press; for its punctuation, which is that of his First Quarto, can be mended by nobody. In read-

That you ſhould thinke, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To ſhew our ſimple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Conſider then, we come but in deſpight.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not heere. That you ſhould here repent you,
The Actors are at hand ; and by their ſhow,
You ſhall know all, that you are like to know.

Theſ. This fellow doth not ſtand vpon points.

Lyſ. He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colt : he knowes not the ſtop. A good morall my Lord. It is not enough to ſpeake, but to ſpeake true.

Hip. Indeed hee hath plaid on his Prologue, like a childe on a Recorder, a ſound, but not in gouernment.

122. *is. All*] *is all* Pope.
123. *heere. That*] *here that* Pope.
125. [Exit. Dyce ii.
126. *points*] *his points* Rowe i, Coll. ii (MS). *this points* Rowe ii.
128. *A good*] Dem. *A good* Cam. conj.
130. *his*] *this* Qq, Cap. Steev. Mal.'90, Coll. Ktly.
131. *a Recorder*] *the Recorder* Ff, Rowe+.

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ing it, we apprehend we see something, and so there is; for it is just possible to point it into meaning (not sense), and that's all; an experiment we shall leave to the reader.—KNIGHT has kindly performed for the reader this task which Capell says 'nobody' can do: 'Had the fellow stood "upon points," it would have run thus: "If we offend, it is with our good will That you should think we come not to offend; But with good will to show our simple skill. That is the true beginning of our end. Consider then. We come: but in despite We do not come. As, minding to content you, Our true intent is all for your delight. We are not here that you should here repent you. The actors are at hand; and, by their show, You shall know all that you are like to know." We fear that we have taken longer to puzzle out this enigma than the poet did to produce it.'—STAUNTON calls attention to a similar distortion by mis-punctuation in Roister Doister's letter to Dame Custance, beginning 'Sweete mistresse, where as I love you nothing at all, Regarding your substance and richesse chiefe of all,' &c.—*Ralph Roister Doister*, III, ii.

128. **the stop**] W. A. WRIGHT: A term in horsemanship, used here in a punning sense. Compare *A Lover's Complaint*, 109: 'What rounds, what bounds, what course, what stop he makes!'

131. **Recorder**] CHAPPELL (*Pop. Music*, &c., 246): Old English musical instruments were made of three or four different sizes, so that a player might take any of the four parts that were required to fill up the harmony. . . . Shakespeare speaks in *Hamlet* [III, ii, 329 of this ed., which see, if needful.—ED.] of the recorder as a little pipe, and in [the present passage says] 'like a *child* on a recorder,' but in an engraving of the instrument it reaches from the lip to the knee of the performer. . . . Salter describes the *recorder*, from which the instrument derives its name, as situate

Thef. His ſpeech was like a tangled chaine: nothing impaired, but all diſordered. Who is next?

Tawyer with a Trumpet before them.

Enter Pyramus and Thisby, Wall, Moone-ſhine, and Lyon.

Prol. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this ſhow,

132, 133. *His...diſordered*] As verse. First line, ending *chaine* (reading *impair'd*) Coll. White i, Ktly (Ktly reading *like unto*).

132. *chaine*] *skein* Anon. ap. Cam.

133. *impaired...diſordered*] *impair'd ...disorder'd* Rowe+.

next] *the next* Ff, Rowe+.

134. Tawyer...] Om. Qq, Pope et seq.

135. Enter] Enter the Presenter Coll. ii, iii (MS), Dyce ii. Enter, with a Trumpet and the Presenter before them, White.

135. Wall, Moone-ſhine] and Wall, and Mooneſhine, Q_1.

Lyon.] Lion, as in dumb shew. Theob.

136. Prol.] Presenter. White, Coll. ii, iii (MS), Dyce ii, iii.

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in the upper part of it, *i. e.* between the hole below the mouth and the highest hole for the finger. He says: 'Of the kinds of music, vocal has always had the preference in esteem, and in consequence the recorder, as *approaching nearest to the sweet delightfulness of the voice*, ought to have the first place in opinion, as we see by the universal use of it confirmed.'—SINGER (ed. ii): To *record* anciently signified to *modulate*. . . . In modern cant *recorders* of corporations are called *flutes*, an ancient jest, the meaning of which is perhaps unknown to those who use it.

131. **gouernment**] M. MASON: Hamlet says, '*Govern* these ventages with your fingers and thumb'—[III, ii, 372].

134. **Tawyer**, &c.] COLLIER (ed. ii): In the MS 'Tawyer' and his trumpet are erased, and 'Enter Presenter' is made to precede the other characters. Such, no doubt, was the stage-arrangement when this play was played in the time of the old annotator, and we may presume that it was so in the time of Shakespeare. In the early state of our drama a *Presenter*, as he was called, sometimes introduced the characters of a play, and as Shakespeare was imitating this species of entertainment, we need entertain little doubt that 'Tawyer with a trumpet,' of F_1, was, in fact, the Presenter, a part then filled by a person of the name of Tawyer. In the MS also the Presenter is made to speak the argument of the play. This was to be made intelligible with a due observation of points, and could not properly be given to the same performer who had delivered the prologue, purposely made so blunderingly ridiculous. In the Qq and Ff, both the prologue and the argument, containing the history of the piece, are absurdly assigned to one man. Perhaps such was the case when the number of the company could not afford separate actors.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i) and DYCE (ed. ii) adopted this plausible 'Presenter' of Collier's MS. The former says that 'the error in the prefix ['*Prol.*' in line 136] arose from the similarity of *Pref.* and *Prol.*, which in the old MS could hardly be distinguished from each other.'—W. A. WRIGHT: 'Tawyer' looks like a misprint for *Players*, unless it is the name of the actor who played the part of Prologue. [All doubt, however, is set at rest, and proof afforded not only that the Folio was printed from a stage-copy, but that 'Tawyer' is neither a misprint nor a substitution for 'Presenter,' through the discovery by HALLIWELL (*Outlines*, p. 500) that Tawyer 'was a subordinate in the pay of Hemmings,

But wonder on, till truth make all things plaine.
This man is *Piramus*, if you would know;
This beauteous Lady, *Thisby* is certaine.
This man, with lyme and rough-caſt, doth preſent
Wall, that vile wall, which did theſe louers ſunder:
And through walls chink (poor ſoules) they are content
To whiſper. At the which, let no man wonder.
This man, with Lanthorne, dog, and buſh of thorne,

139. *beauteous*] *beautious* Qq.
141. *that vile*] *the vile* Ff, Rowe+.
143. *whiſper. At*] *whisper, at* Theob. *whisper; at* Cap.
144. *Lanthorne*] *lanterne* Q_1.

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his burial at St Saviour's in June, 1625, being thus noticed in the sexton's MS note-book: "William Tawier, Mr. Heminges man, gr. and cl., xvj. *d.*" ']

139. Thisby] Hanmer uniformly retains this spelling where the clowns are the speakers; elsewhere, in stage-directions, &c. his spelling is the correct, *Thisbe*. The inference is that he intends *Thisby* to be phonetic, and herein I quite agree with him. In the mouths of the clowns 'Thisbe' was pronounced, I doubt not, *Thisbei*, and 'Pyramus,' *Peiramus*. See next note and line 170, *post*.—ED.

139. certaine] STEEVENS: A burlesque was here intended in the frequent recurrence of *certain* as a bungling rhyme in poetry more ancient than the age of Shakespeare. Thus in a short poem entitled *A lytell Treatise called the Disputacyon or the Complaynte of the Herte through perced with the Lokynge of the Eye.* Imprynted at Lõdon in Flete-strete at the Sygne of the Sonne by Wynkyn de Worde: 'And houndes syxescore and mo certayne—To whome my thought gan to strayne certayne—Whan I had fyrst syght of her certayne—In all honoure she hath no pere certayne—To loke upon a fayre Lady certayne—As moch as is in me I am contente certayne—They made there both two theyr promysse certayne—All armed with margaretes certayne,' &c. Again, in *The Romaunce of the Sowdone of Babylone*, 'He saide "the xij peres bene alle dede, And ye spende your goode in vayne, And therfore doth nowe by my rede, Ye shalle see hem no more certeyn."'—[ll. 2823–6, ed. E. E. Text. Soc.]. Again, 'The kinge turned him ageyn, And alle his Ooste him with, Towarde Mountrible certeyne.'—[*Ib.* ll. 2847–9. In the search through this Romaunce to verify Steevens's quotations I found three other examples, in lines 567, 570, and 1453, of this 'most convenient word,' as W. A. Wright says, 'for filling up a line and at the same time conveying no meaning.'—WALKER (*Crit.* i. 114) cites this 'certain' among other words as of 'a peculiar mode of rhyming—rhyming to the eye as at first sight appears.' In this particular passage 'it is,' he says, 'of a piece with the purposely *incondite* composition of this *dramaticle*.' Wherein, I think, he is right as far as he goes, but he does not go far enough. Not only was this 'dramaticle' 'incondite,' but it is meant to be thoroughly burlesque, where words are mispronounced and accents misplaced. See lines 170, 171, below.—ED.]

140. lyme] HUDSON [reading *loam*]: In Wall's speech, a little after, the old copies have 'This loame, this rough-cast,' &c. So also in III, i: 'And let him have some plaster, or some *Lome*, or some rough-cast about him.'—R. G. WHITE reverses the misprint, and thinks that 'lome' is a misprint for 'lime.' The Cam. Ed. notes that *loam* is als a conjecture of Capell in MS.

Preſenteth moone-ſhine. For if you will know,
By moone-ſhine did theſe Louers thinke no ſcorne
To meet at *Ninus* toombe, there, there to wooe:
This grizy beaſt (which Lyon hight by name)
The truſty *Thisby*, comming firſt by night,
Did ſcarre away, or rather did affright:
And as ſhe fled, her mantle ſhe did fall;
Which Lyon vile with bloody mouth did ſtaine.
Anon comes *Piramus*, ſweet youth and tall,
And findes his *Thisbies* Mantle ſlaine;
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,
He brauely broacht his boiling bloudy breaſt,

148. *grizy*] F_1. *grizly* QqFf.
Lyon hight by name] *by name Lion hight* Theob. Warb. Johns. Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Hal. Sta. Dyce ii, iii. *lion by name hight* Coll. iii.

149. Line marked as omitted, Ktly, Malone conj.

150. *ſcarre*] *ſcare* F_3F_4.

151. *did fall*] *let fall* Pope+.

154. *his*] *his gentle* Ff, Rowe. *his trusty* Qq, Pope et seq.

147. **wooe**] R. G. WHITE (ed. i): It may be remarked here upon the rhyme of 'woo' with 'know' that the former word seems to have had the pure vowel sound of *o*. It was spelled *wooe* or *woe*, and as often in the latter way as the former.

148. **hight by name**] THEOBALD: As all the other parts of this speech are in *alternate* rhyme, excepting that it closes with a *couplet;* and as no rhyme is left to 'name,' we must conclude either a verse is slipt out, which cannot now be retrieved; or by a transposition of the words, as I have placed them, the poet intended a *triplet.* [See Text. Notes.]—The COWDEN-CLARKES (*Sh. Key*, p. 674): We believe that the defective rhyming was intentional, to denote the slipshod style of the doggerel that forms the dialogue in the Interlude, which we have always cherished a conviction Shakespeare intended to be taken as written by Peter Quince himself; because in the Folio we find '*Enter the Prologue Quince*,' and because in IV, i, Bottom says, 'I will get Peter Quince *to write a ballad* of this dream,' showing that Quince is an author as well as stage-manager and deliverer of the Prologue. [The present Editor wholly agrees with the foregoing. In any attempt to improve the language of the rude mechanicals the critic runs a perilous risk of becoming identified with them. —ED.]

151. **fall**] For other examples where this verb and other intransitive verbs are used transitively, see ABBOTT, § 291.

152, 155, 157. **Lyon . . . blade . . . Mulberry**] ABBOTT, § 82: Except to ridicule it, Shakespeare rarely indulges in this archaism of omitting *a* and *the*.

155, 156. JOHNSON: Upton rightly observes that Shakespeare in these lines ridicules the affectation of beginning many words with the same letter. He might have remarked the same of 'The raging rocks And shivering shocks.' Gascoigne, contemporary with our poet, remarks and blames the same affectation.—CAPELL descries in these lines 'a particular burlesque of passages,' which he reprints in his *School*, from *Sir Clyomon and Sir Chlamydes*, and refers to *Gorboduc* as 'blemished with one

And *Thisby*, tarrying in Mulberry ſhade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the reſt,
Let *Lyon*, *Moone-ſhine*, *Wall*, and Louers twaine,
At large diſcourſe, while here they doe remaine.

Exit all but Wall.

Thef. I wonder if the Lion be to ſpeake.

Deme. No wonder, my Lord : one Lion may, when many Aſſes doe.

Exit Lyon, Thisbie, and Mooneſhine.

Wall. In this ſame Interlude, it doth befall,
That I, one *Snowt* (by name) preſent a wall:
And ſuch a wall, as I vvould haue you thinke,
That had in it a crannied hole or chinke:
Through which the Louers, *Piramus* and *Thisbie*

157. *And* Thisby, ...*ſhade*] *And* (*Thisby*...*shade*,) Steev.'85, Mal. Steev.'93, Var. Knt, Hal. Sta. (subs.).
in] *in the* F_3F_4, Rowe+.
161. Om. Qq. Exeunt... Rowe+. Exeunt Prologue, Thisbe, Lion and Moonshine. Cap. Steev. Mal. Exeunt Pres. Thisbe, Lion and Moonshine. Coll. Exeunt Prologue, Presenter, Pyramus, Thisbe, Lion and Moonshine. White.
163, 164. *one*...*doe*] Separate line, Coll. White i.
165. Om. Rowe et seq.
166. *Interlude*] *enterlude* Q_1.
167. Snowt] Flute Qq, Pope.
170. Piramus] Pyr'mus Theob. Warb. Johns.
Thisbie] This-be Theob. i.

affectation, an almost continual alliteration, which Shakespeare calls "affecting the letter," and has exposed to ridicule in *Love's L. L.* IV, ii, 57: "I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility. The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket," &c.' Steevens gives several examples of alliteration from early literature, Halliwell adds more, and Staunton still others, but as I can discern no possible light in which they illustrate Shakespeare, they are not here repeated.—W. A. WRIGHT says of this alliteration that 'it was an exaggeration of the principle upon which Anglo-Saxon verse was constructed.'

167. **Snowt**] Here again is an instance of the greater accuracy for stage purposes of the Folio. The Qq have 'Flute,' who was to act Thisby.

169. **crannied**] See the extract from Golding's *Ovid*, in the Appendix.—CAPELL, who, as an actor, was, I fear, a case of arrested developement, tells us that 'the reciter who would give a comic expression to "crannied" and to "cranny" must make both vowels long.'

170. **Thisbie**] GUEST (i, 91) thus scans: 'Through which | these lov | ers: Pyr | amus and | *Thisby* | ,' and adds, 'Shakespeare elsewhere accents it *This* | *by*; he doubtless put the old and obsolete accent into the mouth of his "mechanicals" for the purposes of ridicule.' As I understand Guest, 'the old and obsolete accent' is *Thisbee*, to rhyme with 'secretlee.'—WALKER (*Crit.* i, 114) here, as in line 139, suggests that there is a rhyme for the eye, and likewise proposes the same scansion as that just given by Guest, but adds 'this is not likely.' I cannot wholly agree with either Guest or Walker That 'Thisbie' must rhyme with 'secretly' is clear, and

Did whiſper often, very ſecretly.
This loame, this rough-caſt, and this ſtone doth ſhew,
That I am that ſame Wall ; the truth is ſo.
And this the cranny is, right and ſiniſter,
Through which the fearefull Louers are to whiſper.

Theſ. Would you deſire Lime and Haire to ſpeake better?

Deme. It is the vvittieſt partition, that euer I heard diſcourſe, my Lord.

Theſ. *Pyramus* drawes neere the Wall, ſilence.

Enter Pyramus.

Pir. O grim lookt night, ô night with hue ſo blacke,

172. *loame*] *lome* Qq. *loam* F_3F_4. *lime* Cap. conj. Var.'21, Coll. Dyce i, ii, White i.

174. [holding up one hand with a finger expanded. Rann.

179. *diſcourſe*] *diſcourſed* F_3F_4.

180. *Wall, ſilence*] *Wall: ſilence* Q_1F_4, Rowe et seq.

181. Om. Qq.

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that in the mouth of rude mechanicals there must be an uncouth or an absurd pronunciation seems to me equally clear. 'Secretly,' like the majority of words ending in an unaccented final *y*, was probably pronounced *secretlei* (see Ellis, *Early Eng. Pron.* pp. 959, 977, 981) by everybody, whether mechanicals or not. The absurdity then comes in by making 'Thisbie' rhyme with it: *Thisbei*. See line 139, above.—ED.

172. **loame . . . shew**] The VAR. 1821 (cited by CAM. ED. as 'Reed,' which is not, I think, strictly accurate) here reads *lime*, and notes 'so folio; quartos *lome*,' a mis-statement which, in a note, the CAM. ED. corrects, but fails to detect what is, I believe, the source of Boswell's or Malone's error. Either the one or the other of these latter editors had been examining CAPELL'S *Various Readings*, where occurs the following: 'This lime, | shew, F^2. | ,' which those who are schooled in the 'anfractuosities' of the Capellian mind understand as meaning that 'This lime' is a conjectural emendation, and that the Folios read 'shew' instead of the *show* of Capell's own text. Boswell or Malone overlooked the conjectural emendation and supposed that 'F^2' referred to *lime*, and hence, I think, the tears.—ED.

174. **sinister**] Elsewhere in *Hen. V:* II, iv, 85, this word is accented on the middle syllable, as given by ABBOTT, § 490, but here, as Abbott says, this accent is used comically.—W. A. WRIGHT says that 'sinister' is used by Snout for two reasons —first, because it is a long word, and then because it gives a sort of rhyme to 'whisper.'

178. **partition**] FARMER: I believe the passage should be read, This is the wittiest *partition* that ever I heard *in discourse*. Alluding to the many stupid *partitions* in the argumentative writings of the time. Shakespeare himself, as well as his contemporaries, uses 'discourse' for *reasoning;* and he here avails himself of the double sense, as he had done before in the word 'partition.'

182. **lookt**] For examples of passive participles used not passively, see ABBOTT, § 374; albeit it is hardly worth while to attempt an explanation of any grammatical anomaly in the speeches of these 'mechanicals.'—ED.

O night, which euer art, when day is not:
O night, ô night, alacke, alacke, alacke,
I feare my *Thisbies* promiſe is forgot.
And thou ô vvall, thou ſweet and louely vvall,
That ſtands betweene her fathers ground and mine,
Thou vvall, ô vvall, ô ſweet and louely vvall,
Shew me thy chinke, to blinke through vvith mine eine.
Thankes courteous vvall. *Ioue* ſhield thee vvell for this.
But vvhat ſee I? No *Thisbie* doe I ſee.
O vvicked vvall, through vvhom I ſee no bliſſe,
Curſt be thy ſtones for thus deceiuing mee.

Thef. The vvall me-thinkes being ſenſible, ſhould curſe againe.

Pir. No in truth ſir, he ſhould not. *Deceiuing me,*
Is *Thisbies* cue; ſhe is to enter, and I am to ſpy
Her through the vvall. You ſhall ſee it vvill fall.

Enter Thisbie.

Pat as I told you; yonder ſhe comes.

Thiſ. O vvall, full often haſt thou heard my mones,
For parting my faire *Piramus*, and me.
My cherry lips haue often kiſt thy ſtones;
Thy ſtones vvith Lime and Haire knit vp in thee.

186. *thou ſweet and*] Ff, Rowe, White i. *O sweet and* Pope+, Ktly. *ô ſweete, ô* Qq, Cap. et cet.

187. *ſtands*] *ſtandes* F$_2$. *ſtandſt* Q$_2$, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. Ktly (subs.).

189. [Wall holds up his fingers. Cap.

196–200. Prose, Pope et seq.

197. *enter,*] *enter now,* Qq, Cap. et seq.

198. *fall.*] *fall* QqF$_3$, Pope et seq.

199. Enter Thisbie.] After line 200, Qq, Pope et seq.

203. *haue*] *hath* F$_4$, Rowe.

204. *Haire*] *hayire* Q$_1$.
vp in thee] *now againe* Qq.

182, 184, 186, &c. ô] I suppose that this circumflexed *o* is used merely to avoid confusion with the *o* which is an abbreviation of *of*. It is scarcely likely that it has any reference to pronunciation.—ED.

188. ô vvall, ô sweet] HALLIWELL: The repetition of the vocative case is of frequent occurrence in Elizabethan writers. Thus Gascoigne, in his translation of the *Jocasta* of Euripides, 1566, paraphrases this brief sentence of the original, 'O mother, O wife most wretched,' into: 'O wife, O mother, O both wofull names, O wofull mother, and O wofull wyfe! O woulde to God, alas! O woulde to God, Thou nere had bene my mother, nor my wyfe!' Compare also the following: 'Oh! Love, sweet Love, oh! high and heavenly Love, The only line that leades to happy life.'—Breton's *Pilgrimage to Paradise*, 1592.

204. in thee] See Text. Notes.—WHITE (ed. i): A variation of this kind between

Pyra. I ſee a voyce ; now vvill I to the chinke,
To ſpy and I can heare my *Thisbies* face. *Thisbie?*
Thiſ. My Loue thou art, my Loue I thinke.
Pir. Thinke vvhat thou vvilt, I am thy Louers grace,
And like *Limander* am I truſty ſtill.
Thiſ. And like *Helen* till the Fates me kill.
Pir. Not *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, was ſo true.
Thiſ. As *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, I to you.
Pir. O kiſſe me through the hole of this vile wall.
Thiſ. I kiſſe the wals hole, not your lips at all.
Pir. Wilt thou at *Ninnies* tombe meete me ſtraight way?
Thiſ. Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.
Wall. Thus haue I *Wall*, my part diſcharged ſo;
And being done, thus *Wall* away doth go. *Exit Clow.*
Du. Now is the morall downe betweene the two Neighbors.

205, 206. *ſee...heare*] *heare...ſee* Ff, Rowe.
206. *and I*] *an I* Pope et seq.
Thisbie] Separate line, Rowe ii et seq.
207. *Loue thou art, my Loue*] QqFf, Cam. White ii. *Love thou art, my love,* Rowe, Pope. *Love I thou art, my love,* Theob. Warb. Johns. *Love I thou art my love,* Han. et cet.
209. Limander] Limandea Pope.
210. *And like*] *And I like* QqF$_2$, Rowe et seq.
213. *vile*] *vilde* Q$_1$.
217. *Tide...tide*] *'Tide...'tide* Cap. et seq.
[Exeunt Pyra. and Th. Dyce.
219. Exit Clow.] Om. Qq. Exeunt Wall, Pyra. and Th. Cap.
220, 225, &c. Du.] Duk. Q$_1$. Thes. Rowe et seq.
220. *morall downe*] *Moon vſed* Qq, Pope i. *moral down* Rowe, White i. *mure all down* Theobald conj. Han. Coll. ii. *wall downe* Coll. MS, White ii. *mural obstacle* (or *partition*) *down* Wagner conj. *Mural down* Pope ii et cet.

F$_1$ and the Qq is not worthy of notice, save for the evidence it affords that the copy of Q$_2$, which Heminge and Condell furnished as copy to the printers of F$_1$ had been corrected either by Shakespeare or some one else in his theatre.

209, 210, 211. **Limander . . . Helen . . . Shafalus to Procrus**] CAPELL (116 *a*): This 'Limander' should be Paris, by the lady he is coupl'd with; and he is call'd by his other name, Alexander, corrupted into 'Alisander' (as in *Love's Lab. L.* V, ii, 567, et seq.) and 'Lisander,' which master Bottom may be allow'd to make 'Limander' of.—JOHNSON: Limander and Helen are spoken by the blundering player for Leander and Hero. Shafalus and Procrus, for Cephalus and Procris.—MALONE: *Procris and Cephalus*, by Henry Chute, was entered on the Stationers' Registers by John Wolff in 1593, and probably published in the same year. It was a poem, but not dramatic, as has been suggested.—HALLIWELL: Chute's poem is alluded to in Nash's *Have with You to Saffron Walden*, 1596.—BLACKSTONE:

Dem. No remedie my Lord, when Wals are ſo wil- 222
full, to heare without vvarning.

223. *heare*] *rear* Han. Warb. Cap. *sheer* Han. conj. MS (ap. Cam.). *leave* Gould.

Limander stands evidently for Leander, but how came 'Helen' to be coupled with him? Might it not have originally been wrote *Heren*, which is as ridiculous a corruption of Hero as the other is of her lover?

220. morall] THEOBALD (*Sh. Rest.* p. 142): I am apt to think the poet wrote 'now is the *mure all* down,' and then Demetrius's reply is apposite enough.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): *Mural* for *wall* is an anomaly in English, and is too infelicitous to be regarded as one of Shakespeare's daring feats of language. . . . 'Moon used' of the Qq could not be a misprint for 'moral down.' . . . It should be remembered that the moon figures in the interlude, as the spectators knew; and as to the use that the two neighbours were to make of the moon, the remark of Demetrius indicates it plainly enough: '*No remedy*, my lord, when walls are so wilful to *hear without warning*.' But Shakespeare evidently thought that it would be plainer if the wall were represented both as the restraint upon the passions of the lovers and as a pander to them, and so he changed 'moon used' to 'moral down.' He did this, I believe, with the more surety of attaining his point, because 'moral' was then pronounced *mo-ral*, and 'mural,' as I am inclined to think, *moo-ral*. [In his ed. ii, WHITE adopts Collier's *wall* without comment.]—COLLIER (ed. ii): It would seem that in the time of the old MS neither 'moral' nor *mure all* were the words on the stage; he inserts *wall*.—W. A. WRIGHT: Pope's emendation, so far as I am aware, has no evidence in its favour. Perhaps the Qq reading 'Now is the Moon vsed' is a corruption of a stage-direction, and the reading of the Ff may have arisen from an attempt to correct in manuscript the words in a copy of the Qto by turning 'Moon' into 'Wall,' the result being a compound having the beginning of one word and the end of the other. If there were any evidence of the existence of such a word as *mural* used as a substantive, it would be but pedantic and affected, and so unsuited to Theseus. Having regard, therefore, to the double occurrence of the word 'wall' in the previous speech, and its repetition by Demetrius, I cannot but think that [Collier's *wall* is right], just as Bottom says 'the wall is down,' line 344.—HENRY JOHNSON (p. xvi): The agreement of the Qq gives a strong presumption in favour of the correctness of a reading. Something besides can be said for the reasonableness of this passage. The Prologue had announced ['moone-shine,' see lines 144–147]. The Enterlude then proceeded as far as this agreement of Pyramus and Thisbie to meet at the tomb, and Wall, who had served between the two neighbors, makes his explanation and leaves the stage. Thereupon the Duke says that now, in accordance with the statement of the Prologue, the Moon will be used between the two neighbors, probably in some such ingenuous way as the Wall had been. [The objection to Collier's *wall* is, I think, that it makes Theseus's remark so very tame, not far above the level of a remark by Bottom. Perhaps it may receive a little force if we suppose that Wall suddenly drops to his side his extended arm. I am inclined to accept White's explanation that in the old pronunciation lay a pun, now lost, and for a pun, as Johnson said, Shakespeare would lose the world, and be content to lose it.—ED.]

223. to heare] For 'to hear,' equivalent to *as to hear*, see ABBOTT, § 281.

223. to heare] WARBURTON: Shakespeare could never write this nonsense; we should read: 'to *rear* without warning,' *i. e.* it is no wonder that walls should be

Dut. This is the ſillieſt ſtuffe that ere I heard. 224

224, 227, &c. Dut.] Hip. Rowe et seq. 224. *ere*] *euer* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Dyce i, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii.

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suddenly down, when they were as suddenly up; *rear'd without warning*.—HEATH: Perhaps the reader may be pleased to think the poet might possibly have written, 'to *disappear* without warning,' and in that case the words 'without warning' must be understood to refer solely to the neighbours whose dwellings the wall in question parted.—KENRICK (*Rev.* p. 22): The interview between Pyramus and Thisbe is no sooner over than Wall, apparently without waiting for his cue, as nobody speaks to him and he speaks to no person in the drama, takes his departure. When, therefore, Demetrius replies to Theseus 'when walls are so wilful to hear without warning' he means 'are so wilfull as to take their *cue* before it is given to them.' That the expression, however, may bear some latent meaning, I do not deny; possibly it may refer to a custom practised by the magistrates in many places abroad, of sticking up a notice or warning on the walls of ruinated or untenanted houses, for the owners either to repair or pull them quite down.—FARMER: Demetrius's reply alludes to the proverb, 'Walls have ears.' A *wall* between almost any *two neighbours* would soon be *down*, were it to exercise this faculty, without previous *warning*. [This is, perhaps, the correct interpretation.—ED.]

224. This is, &c.] MAGINN (p. 119): When Hippolyta speaks scornfully of the tragedy, Theseus answers that the best of this kind (scenic performances) are but shadows, and the worst no worse if imagination amend them. She answers that it must be *your* imagination then, not *theirs*. He retorts with a joke on the vanity of actors, and the conversation is immediately changed. The meaning of the Duke is that, however we may laugh at the silliness of Bottom and his companions in their ridiculous play, the author labours under no more than the common calamity of dramatists. They are all but dealers in shadowy representations of life; and if the worst among them can set the mind of the spectator at work, he is equal to the best. The answer to Theseus is that none but the best, or, at all events, those who approach to excellence, can call with success upon imagination to invest their shadows with substance. Such playwrights as Quince the carpenter,—and they abound in every literature and every theatre,—draw our attention so much to the absurdity of the performance actually going on before us that we have no inclination to trouble ourselves with considering what substance in the background their shadows should have represented. Shakespeare intended the remark as a compliment or as a consolation to less successful wooers of the comic or the tragic Muse, and touches briefly on the matter; but it was also intended as an excuse for the want of effect upon the stage of some of the finer touches of such dramatists as himself, and an appeal to all true judges of poetry to bring it before the tribunal of their own imagination; making but a matter of secondary inquiry how it appears in a theatre as delivered by those who, whatever others may think of them, would, if taken at their own estimation, 'pass for excellent men.' His own magnificent creation of fairy land in the Athenian wood must have been in his mind, and he asks an indulgent play of fancy not more for Oberon and Titania, the glittering rulers of the elements, than for the shrewd and knavish Robin Goodfellow, the lord of practical jokes, or the dull and conceited Bottom, 'the shallowest thickskin of the barren sort.'—DOWDEN (p. 70): Maginn has missed the more important significance of the passage. Its dramatic appropriateness is the essential

Du. The beſt in this kind are but ſhadowes, and the worſt are no worſe, if imagination amend them. 225

Dut. It muſt be your imagination then, & not theirs.

Duk. If wee imagine no worſe of them then they of themſelues, they may paſſe for excellent men. Here com two noble beaſts, in a man and a Lion. 230

229. *com*] *comes* Ff, Rowe i. *come* Qq, Rowe ii et seq.

230. *beaſts, in a man*] QqFf, Rowe i, W. A. Wright. *beasts in a moon* Theob. *beasts in a man* Warb. *beasts in, a moon* Han. Johns. Steev. Sing. Dyce, Ktly. *beasts in, a man* Rowe ii et cet.

point to observe. To Theseus, the great man of action, the worst and the best of these shadowy representations are all one. He graciously lends himself to be amused, and will not give unmannerly rebuff to the painstaking craftsmen who have so laboriously done their best to please him. But Shakespeare's mind by no means goes along with the utterance of Theseus in this instance any more than when he places in a single group the lover, the lunatic, and the poet. With one principle enounced by the Duke, however, Shakespeare evidently does agree, namely, that it is the business of the dramatist to set the spectator's imagination to work, that the dramatist must rather appeal to the mind's eye than to the eye of sense, and that the co-operation of the spectator with the poet is necessary. For the method of Bottom and his company is precisely the reverse, as Gervinus has observed, of Shakespeare's own method. They are determined to leave nothing to be supplied by the imagination. Wall must be plastered; Moonshine must carry lanthorn and bush. And when Hippolyta, again becoming impatient of absurdity, exclaims, 'I am aweary of this moon! would he would change!' Shakespeare further insists on his piece of dramatic criticism by urging, through the Duke's mouth, the absolute necessity of the man in the moon being *within* his lanthorn. Shakespeare as much as says, 'If you do not approve my dramatic method of presenting fairy-land and the heroic world, here is a specimen of the rival method. You think my fairy-world might be amended. Well, amend it with your own imagination. I can do no more unless I adopt the artistic ideas of these Athenian handicraftsmen.'

230. **in a man**] THEOBALD: Immediately after Theseus's saying this, we have 'Enter Lyon and Moonshine.' It seems very probable, therefore, that our author wrote 'in a *moon* and a lion.' The one having a crescent and a lanthorn before him, and representing the man in the moon; and the other in a lion's hide.—MALONE: Theseus only means to say that the 'man' who represented the moon, and came in at the same time, with a lanthorn in his hand and a bush of thorns at his back, was as much a beast as he who performed the part of the lion.—FARMER: Possibly 'man' was the marginal interpretation of *moon-calf*, and, being more intelligible, got into the text.—W. A. WRIGHT adheres to the punctuation of the QqFf, although he deserted it in the second edition of the *Cam. Ed.* His note is that the change of the comma from before 'in' to after it is unnecessary. '"In" here signifies "in the character of," see IV, ii, 25: "sixpence a day *in* Piramus, or nothing." Theobald, with great plausibility, reads *moon*.' [WALKER (*Crit.* i, 315) also conjectured *moon*, independently. Possibly the choice between 'man' and *moon* will lie in the degree of absurdity which strikes us in calling either the one or the other a beast.—HARNESS has the shrewd remark, which almost settles the question in favour of 'man,' to the

Enter Lyon and Moone-ſhine. 231

Lyon. You Ladies, you (whoſe gentle harts do feare
The ſmallêſt monſtrous mouſe that creepes on floore)
May now perchance, both quake and tremble heere,
When Lion rough in wildeſt rage doth roare. 235
Then know that I, one *Snug* the Ioyner am
A Lion fell, nor elſe no Lions dam: 237

236. *one* Snug] *as* Snug Qq, Steev.'85.

236, 237. *one...dam*] *am Snug the joiner in A Lion-fell, or else a Lion's ſkin.* Daniel.

237. *A Lion fell*] *No lion fell* Rowe+, Cap. Dyce ii, Coll. iii. *A lion-fell* Sing. ii, White, Cam. Ktly. *A lion's fell* Field, Dyce i, Coll. ii.

elſe] *eke* Cap. conj.

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effect that Theseus saw merely 'a man with a lantern, and could not possibly conceive that he was intended to "disfigure moonshine."'—ED.]

237. **Lion fell, nor else**] MALONE: That is, that I am Snug, the joiner, and neither a lion nor a lion's dam. Dr Johnson has justly observed in a note on *All's Well* that *nor*, in the phraseology of our author's time, often related to two members of a sentence, though only expressed in the latter. So, in the play just mentioned, 'contempt *nor* bitterness Were in his pride or sharpness.'—I, ii, 36.—BARRON FIELD (*Sh. Soc. Papers*, ii, 60): I would observe upon [this note of Malone] that where the verb *follows* the negative nominatives, as in the passage quoted by Malone, this is the phraseology not only of Shakespeare's, but of the present time, as in Gray: 'Helm nor hauberk's twisted mail, Nor ev'n thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail,' &c., but I defy any commentator to produce an instance of such a construction where the verb *precedes* the nominatives. In that case, the verb has already affirmed before the word of negation comes, and the negative cannot relate back, to make the verb deny. In other words, it is impossible that 'I am a lion, nor a lion's dam' can mean 'I am *not* a lion, nor a lion's dam,' or 'I am *neither* a lion nor a lion's dam.' I boldly say there is no instance in the English language at any time of such a phraseology. And what does Malone do with the word 'else'? He gives it no meaning. And why say a fell or cruel lion? Or introduce a lion's dam or mother? I will now show how one little letter shall light up the whole passage with natural meaning and give a sense to every word: 'A lion's fell, nor else no lion's dam.' 'I, Snug, the joiner, am only a lion's *skin;* nor any otherwise than as a lion's skin may be said to be pregnant with a lion, am I the mother of one.' *Fell* is a word scarcely yet obsolete for *skin*, and now the words 'else' and 'dam' have a meaning; and all this sense is obtained by only supposing that the letter *s* has dropped from the text. It might, indeed, be done without any other alteration than that of a hyphen, *lion-fell;* but, as we find, in other parts of Shakespeare the words *calf's skin* and *lion's skin* with the genitive, I have thought it better to insert the *s*.—COLLIER (ed. ii): This judicious change of Field is doubtless correct, as it is the reading of the MS.—LETTSOM (*Blackwood*, Aug. 1853): Field's excellent emendation ought to go into the text, if it has not done so already.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): Field's change is the minutest ever proposed for the solution of a real difficulty.—HALLIWELL [substantially following RITSON, p. 48]: Snug means to say, 'I am neither a lion fell, nor in any respect a lion's dam,' that is, I am neither a lion nor a lioness. The conjunction *nor* frequently admitted of *neither* being pre-

For if I ſhould as Lion come in ſtrife 238
Into this place, 'twere pittie of my life.
Du. A verie gentle beaſt, and of a good conſcience. 240
Dem. The verie beſt at a beaſt, my Lord, ỹ ere I ſaw.
Lif. This Lion is a verie Fox for his valor.
Du. True, and a Gooſe for his diſcretion.
Dem. Not ſo my Lord: for his valor cannot carrie his diſcretion, and the Fox carries the Gooſe. 245
Du. His diſcretion I am ſure cannot carrie his valor: for the Gooſe carries not the Fox. It is well; leaue it to his diſcretion, and let vs hearken to the Moone.
Moon. This Lanthorne doth the horned Moone preſent. 250

239. *of my*] *on my* Qq, Cap., Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Sta. Dyce ii, Ktly, Cam. White ii. *o'* Cap. conj. MS (ap. Cam.).
248. *hearken*] *liſten* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, Cam. Ktly.
248. *Moone*] *man* Anon. ap. Cam.
249, &c. *Lanthorne*] *lantern* Steev. '93, Mal. Reed, Knt, Sing. Dyce, Coll. Sta.

viously understood, and two negatives often merely strengthened the negation. Barron Field ingeniously avoided the grammatical difficulty.—STAUNTON: Field's emendation is extremely ingenious; but in the rehearsal of this scene Snug is expressly enjoined to show his face through the lion's neck, tell his name and trade, and say: 'If you think I am come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life; *No*, I am no such thing.' I am disposed, therefore, if *nor* is not to be taken as relating to both members of the sentence, to read [with Rowe] *i. e.* neither lion nor lioness.—WALKER (*Crit.* i, 262): Field's emendation is perhaps right, if *A* can be tolerated. But surely Shakespeare wrote and pointed [as in Rowe]. [All appeals to grammar in the interpretation of the speeches of these clowns seem to me superfluous; its laws are here suspended. The change of 'A' into *No* is, therefore, needless. Since 'A lion fell' (with or without a hyphen) may mean *A lion's skin*, no change whatever is required. Barron Field's high deserving lies in his discerning that 'fell' is a noun and not an adjective; and that by this interpretation point is given to 'lion's dam.' For Snug to say that he is 'neither a lion nor a lioness' is, to me, pointless, but all is changed if we suppose him to say that he is a lion's skin, and only because, as such, he encloses a lion, can he be a lioness.—ED.]

239. **of my**] COLLIER (ed. ii): 'On *your* life' is the reading of the MS. We follow the older reading, but it is questionable. [The very fact that it is 'questionable' makes it, in Snug's mouth, the more probable.—ED.]

241. **best at a beast**] WHITE (ed. i): From the nature of this speech it is plain that 'best' and 'beast' were pronounced alike. [This is stated, I think, a little too strongly in a matter which is difficult of proof. Compositors, we know, were apt to spell phonetically, accordingly we find them spelling *least, lest*, which is a pretty good guide to the pronunciation of that word. But I can recall no instance where *beast* is spelled *best*. There may be such. Age and familiarity with the old compositors make one extremely cautious.—ED.]

De. He ſhould haue worne the hornes on his head.
Du. Hee is no creſcent, and his hornes are inuiſible, within the circumference.
Moon. This lanthorne doth the horned Moone preſent: My ſelfe, the man i'th Moone doth ſeeme to be.
Du. This is the greateſt error of all the reſt; the man ſhould be put into the Lanthorne. How is it els the man i'th Moone?
Dem. He dares not come there for the candle.
For you ſee, it is already in ſnuffe.
Dut. I am vvearie of this Moone; vvould he would change.

251. *on his*] *upon his* Han.
252. *no*] *not* Coll. ii, iii (MS), Dyce ii, iii.
254, 255. Two lines of verse, QqF_3F_4, Rowe et seq.
255, 268. *man i'th Moone*] *man-i'-the-moon* Dyce ii, iii.
255. *doth*] Ff, Rowe+, White i, Sta. *doe* Qq, Cap. et cet.
259, 260. Prose, Q_1, Pope et seq.
261. *vvearie*] *aweary* Q_1, Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. Dyce, White, Sta. Cam. Ktly.
vvould] *'would* Theob.

249. **Lanthorne**] STEEVENS needlessly modernised this word into *lantern*, and has been followed by many of the best editors, thereby obliterating the jingle, if there be one, in 'This Lant*horne* doth the *horned* moone present.' The CAMBRIDGE EDITION, both first and second, nicely discriminates between the pronunciation of Snug and of Theseus by giving *lanthorn* to the former and *lantern* to the latter. This distinction W. A. WRIGHT overlooked or disregarded in his own *Clarendon Edition*. —ED.

252. **no creſcent**] COLLIER [reading *not*]: The *t* most likely dropped out in the press.

255. **the man i'th Moone**] As an illustration of the text the voluminous mass of folk-lore which has gathered around this 'man' seems no more appropriate here than in Caliban's allusion to him in *The Tempest*. The zealous student is referred to the two or three folio pages in Halliwell *ad loc.* or to Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* there cited. From tender years every English-speaking child knows that there is a man in the moon, and is familiar with his premature descent and with his mysterious desire to visit the town of Norwich. Which is all we need to know here.—ED.

256. **greateſt error of all the reſt**] ABBOTT, § 409, cites this, among others, as an instance of 'the confusion of two constructions (a thoroughly Greek idiom, though independent in English),' and illustrates it by Milton's famous line: 'The fairest of her daughters, Eve,' where the two confused constructions are 'Eve fairer *than* all her daughters' and 'Eve fairest *of* all women.'—W. A. WRIGHT cites Bacon's Essay *Of Envy* (ed. Wright, p. 35): 'Of all other Affections, it is the most importune and continuall.'

260. **ſnuffe**] JOHNSON: 'Snuff' ſignifies both the cinder of a candle and hasty anger.—STEEVENS: Thus alſo, in *Love's Lab. L.* V, ii, 22, 'You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff.'

Du. It appeares by his ſmal light of diſcretion, that he is in the wane : but yet in courteſie, in all reaſon, vve muſt ſtay the time.

Lyſ. Proceed Moone.

Moon. All that I haue to ſay, is to tell you, that the Lanthorne is the Moone; I, the man in the Moone; this thorne buſh, my thorne buſh; and this dog, my dog.

Dem. Why all theſe ſhould be in the Lanthorne: for they are in the Moone. But ſilence, heere comes *Thisby.*

Enter Thisby.

Thiſ. This is old *Ninnies* tombe : where is my loue?

Lyon. Oh.

The Lion roares, Thisby runs off.

Dem. Well roar'd Lion.

Du. Well run *Thisby.*

Dut. Well ſhone Moone.
Truly the Moone ſhines with a good grace.

Du. Wel mouz'd Lion.

Dem. And then came *Piramus.*

Lyſ. And ſo the Lion vaniſht.

263. *his*] *this* Pope, Han. Mal.
268. *in the*] *ith* Q_1. *i'the* Cap. Hal. Cam.
270. *Why all*] *Why? all* Q_1.
270, 271. *for they*] *for all theſe* Q_1, Coll. Sing. Dyce, Cam. Ktly.
273. *old...tombe*] *ould...tumbe* Q_1.
where is] *wher's* Q_2.
274. *Oh.*] *Oh. Ho. Ho.*— Han.
275. Om. Qq.
278. *ſhone*] *ſhoone* Q_2.
278, 279. As prose, Qq, Cap. et seq.
279. *with a*] *with* Rowe i.
[Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and Exit. Cap.
280. *mouz'd*] QqFf, Theob. Warb. Johns. *mouth'd* Rowe, Pope, Han. *mous'd* Cap. et cet.
281, 282. *then came...ſo the Lion vaniſht*] *ſo comes...ſo the moon vanishes* Steev.'85. *so comes...then the moon vanishes* Farmer, Steev.'93, Var. Sing. i.

263. **smal light of discretion**] STAUNTON: So in *Love's Lab. L.* V, ii, 734, 'I have seen the day of wrong *through the little hole of discretion.*' The expression was evidently familiar, though we have never met with any explanation of it.

280. **mouz'd**] STEEVENS: Theseus means that the lion has well tumbled and bloodied the veil of Thisby.—MALONE: That is, to mammock, to tear in pieces, as a cat tears a mouse.

281, 282. **And . . . vanisht**] FARMER thus emended these lines: 'And *so comes* Pyramus. And *then* the *moon vanishes.*' Of this emendation STEEVENS remarks that 'it were needless to say anything in its defence. The reader, indeed, may ask why this glaring corruption was suffered to remain so long in the text.'—HARNESS: I have restored the text of F_1. Farmer's alteration on the last line, 'and so the moon vanishes,' cannot be right, for the very first lines of Pyramus on entering eulogise its

Enter Piramus. 283

Pyr. Sweet Moone, I thank thee for thy funny beames,
I thanke thee Moone, for ſhining now ſo bright: 285
For by thy gracious, golden, glittering beames,

286. *beames*] Qq. *gleams* Knt conj. Sta. i, White, Sing. ii, Cam. Dyce ii, iii, Marshall. *ſtreames* Ff, Rowe et cet.

beams, and his last words are addressed to it as present. [To the same effect, substantially, COLLIER, ed. i.]—KNIGHT [who also returns to the QqFf]: Farmer makes this correction, because, in the mock-play, the moon vanishes after Pyramus dies. But Demetrius and Lysander do not profess to have any knowledge of the play; it is Philostrate who has 'heard it over.' They are thinking of the classical story, and, like Hamlet, they are each 'a good chorus.'—DYCE (ed. i) [in answer to Knight]: Now, if Demetrius and Lysander had *no knowledge of the play*, they must have been sound asleep during the Dumb-show and the laboured exposition of the Prologue-speaker. And if they were 'thinking of the classical story,' they must have read it in a version different from that of Ovid; for, according to his account, the 'lea saeva' had returned 'in silvas' *before the arrival of Pyramus*, who, indeed, appears to have been somewhat slow in keeping the assignation, 'Serius egressus,' &c. (Compare, too, the long and tedious *History of Pyramus and Thisbie* in the *Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions*, 1578, p. 171 of the reprint.) [To the foregoing Dyce adds in his ed. ii]: Mr W. N. LETTSOM observes, 'Should not we transpose these lines, and read, "And so the *lion's* vanished. *Now* then *comes* Pyramus"?'—Mr Swynfen Jervis would transpose the lines without altering the words. [Herein Jervis was anticipated by SPEDDING, whose emendation is recorded in the first CAM. ED., 1863, and is adopted by HUDSON, by W. A. WRIGHT, and by WAGNER.]

286. **glittering beames**] KNIGHT: If the editor of F_2 had put *gleams* [instead of *streames*] the ridicule of excessive alliteration would have been carried further.—COLLIER: The editor of F_2 substituted *streams*, perhaps, upon some then existing authority which we have no right to dispute.—DYCE (*Rem.* p. 49): The editor of F_2 gave here what Shakespeare undoubtedly wrote. Neither Knight nor Collier appears to recollect that from the earliest times *stream* has been frequently used in the sense of *ray*. [Here follow eight examples of the use of *stream* in this sense from Chaucer to Beaumont and Fletcher, to which might be added another given by CAPELL, from Sackville's *Induction* in the *Mirror of Magistrates*, all valuable, but superfluous here. —STAUNTON (ed. i) adopted Knight's conj., but in his *Library Edition* returns to 'streams,' which he says he prefers.]—WALKER (*Crit.* iii, 52): I think the alliteration requires *gleams*.—LETTSOM (footnote to Walker): I must confess I should prefer *gleams*, but for one reason. If I may trust Mrs Cowden-Clarke, this common and convenient word never once appears in so voluminous a writer as Shakespeare. Even its kinsman, *gloom*, is also an exile from his pages. *Glooming* or *gloomy* has slipped in at the close of *Rom. and Jul.*; otherwise it is confined to *1 Hen. VI* and *Tit. And.* It really looks as if Shakespeare had an objection to these words; still, for that very reason, he may have put *gleams* into the mouth of Bottom. [Mrs Furness's *Concordance* gives an instance of *gleam'd* from the *R. of L.* 1378: 'And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights'; and of *gloomy*, from the same, line 803: 'Keep still possession of thy gloomy place.' The unanimity of the Quartos and First Folio cannot be lightly whistled down the wind. The fact that 'beams' is wrong and *streams* or

I truſt to taſte of trueſt *Thisbies* ſight.
But ſtay : O ſpight ! but marke, poore Knight,
What dreadful dole is heere ?
Eyes do you ſee ! How can it be !
O dainty Ducke : O Deere !
Thy mantle good ; what ſtaind with blood !
Approch you Furies fell :
O Fates ! come, come : Cut thred and thrum,
Quaile, cruſh, conclude, and quell.

287. *taſte*] *take* Qq, Coll. Cam. White ii. Thisbies] Thiſby Q_1, Coll. Cam. White ii. Thisbie Q_2.
288–295. Twelve lines, Pope et seq.
291. *Deere*] Ff, Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb. *deare* Qq, Johns. et seq.
292. *good ; what*] *good, what*, Q_1. *good, what* Q_2.
293. *you*] Ff, Rowe+, White i. *ye* Qq, Cap. et cet.

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gleams manifestly right, seems to me the very reason why it should be retained in the speech of one whose eye had not heard, nor his ear seen, nor his hand tasted a dream which he had in the wood where he had gone to rehearse obscenely.—ED.]

287. **taste**] W. A. WRIGHT: This is quite in keeping with 'I see a voice,' line 205. [And yet, after this true note, Wright, in his text, follows the correct but incorrect Qq.—ED.]

293. **Approch you Furies**, &c.] MALONE: In these lines and in those spoken by Thisbe, 'O sisters three,' &c., lines 334, *et seq.* the poet probably intended, as Dr Farmer observed to me, to ridicule a passage in *Damon and Pythias*, by Richard Edwards. 1582: 'Ye *furies*, all at once On me your torments trie: Gripe me, you greedy griefs, And present pangues of death, *You sisters three, with cruel handes With speed come stop my breath !*' [p. 44, ed. Hazlett's *Dodsley*].—W. A. WRIGHT (p. xx): Certainly in this play [just cited] and in the tragical comedy of *Appius and Virginia*, printed in 1575, may be found doggerel no better than that which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Bottom. See, for example, the speech of Judge Appius to Claudius, beginning, 'The furies fell of Limbo lake My princely days do short,' &c. [p. 131, ed. Hazlett's *Dodsley*]. It is also worth while to notice that the song quoted in *Rom. and Jul.* IV, v, 128, 'When griping grief the heart doth wound,' &c. is by the author of *Damon and Pythias.*

294. **thrum**] NARES: The tufted part beyond the tie, at the end of the warp, in weaving; or any collection or tuft of short thread.—WARNER: It is popularly used for very coarse yarn. The maids now call a mop of yarn a *thrum mop*.—STEEVENS: So in Howell's *Letter to Sir Paul Neale:* 'Translations are like the wrong side of a Turkey carpet, which useth to be full of thrums and knots, and nothing so even as the right side.' The thought is borrowed from Don Quixote.—HALLIWELL: So in Herrick, 'Thou who wilt not love, doe this; Learne of me what Woman is. Something made of thred and thrumme; A meere Botch of all and some.'—*Poems*, p. 84 [vol. i, p. 100, ed. Singer].

295. **quell**] JOHNSON: Murder; *manquellers* being, in the old language, the term for which *murderers* is now used.—NARES: Hence 'Jack the giant-queller' was once used [Notes on *Macbeth*, I, vii, 72].

Du. This paſſion, and the death of a deare friend,
Would go neere to make a man looke ſad.
Dut. Beſhrew my heart, but I pittie the man.
Pir. O wherefore Nature, did'ſt thou Lions frame?
Since Lion vilde hath heere deflour'd my deere:
Which is: no, no, which was the faireſt Dame
That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheere.
Come teares, confound: Out ſword, and wound
The pap of *Piramus*:
I, that left pap, where heart doth hop;
Thus dye I, thus, thus, thus.
Now am I dead, now am I fled, my ſoule is in the sky,
Tongue loſe thy light, Moone take thy flight,

296, 297. As prose, Qq, Johns. et seq.
297. *neere*] *well near* Ktly.
298. *I*] *I do* Ktly.
300. *vilde*] Qq. *vild* Ff, Hal. White i. *wild* Rowe. *vile* Pope et cet.
deere] *deare* Qq, Rowe et seq.
302. *lik'd, that look'd*] *lik't, that look't* Qq.
303–309. Twelve lines, Johns. et seq.
305. *hop*] *rap* Gould.
[Stabs himself. Dyce.
308. *Tongue*] *Sunne* or *sun* Capell conj. *Moon* Elze.
loſe] *looſe* Q_1.
Moone] *Dog* Elze.

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296. **This passion**] COLLIER (*Notes*, &c., p. 109): This 'passion' has particular reference to the 'passion' of Pyramus on the fate of Thisbe, and therefore the MS properly changes 'and' to *on*, and reads: 'This passion *on* the death,' &c. [Collier did not afterwards, in his ed. ii, refer to this correction.]—R. G. WHITE (*Putnam's Maga.* Oct. 1853, p. 393): The humour of the present speech consists in coupling the ridiculous fustian of the clown's assumed passion with an event which would, in itself, make a man look sad. Collier's MS extinguishes the fun at once by reading *on*.—STAUNTON: This reading *on* by the MS is one proof among many of his inability to appreciate anything like subtle humour. Had he never heard the old proverbial saying, 'He that loseth his wife and sixpence, *hath lost a tester*'?—W. A. WRIGHT: For 'passion,' in the sense of violent expression of sorrow,' see line 319, and *Hamlet*, II, ii, 587: 'Had he the motive and the cue for passion.'

303. **confound**] Both STEEVENS and W. A. WRIGHT cite examples to elucidate the meaning of this word. Where is the British National Anthem?—ED.

305. **pap**] STEEVENS: It ought to be remembered that the broad pronunciation, now almost peculiar to the Scotch, was anciently current in England. 'Pap,' therefore, was sounded *pop*. [See ELLIS, *Early Eng. Pron.* p. 954, where the rhyme in these lines is noted.]

306. **thus, thus, thus**] COLLIER (ed. ii): Modern editors give no cause for the death of Pyramus, but the MS places these words in the margin: *Stab himself as often*, meaning, no doubt, every time he utters the word 'thus.'

308. **Tongue**] CAPELL: Bottom's 'Tongue,' instead of *Sunne* or *Sun*, is a very choice blunder.—HALLIWELL: The present error of 'tongue' for *sun* appears too absurd to be humorous, and it may well be questioned whether it be not a misprint.

Now dye, dye, dye, dye, dye.

Dem. No Die, but an ace for him ; for he is but one.

Lif. Leſſe then an ace man. For he is dead, he is nothing.

Du. With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet recouer, and proue an Aſſe.

Dut. How chance Moone-ſhine is gone before? *Thisby* comes backe, and findes her Louer.

Enter Thisby.

Duke. She wil finde him by ſtarre-light.
Heere ſhe comes, and her paſſion ends the play.

Dut. Me thinkes ſhee ſhould not vſe a long one for ſuch a *Piramus* : I hope ſhe will be breeſe.

Dem. A Moth wil turne the ballance, which *Piramus* which *Thisby* is the better.

Lyſ. She hath ſpyed him already, with thoſe ſweete (eyes.

309. [Dies. Theob. dies. Exit Moonshine. Cap.

314. *and proue*] *and yet proue* Q_1, White i.

315, 316. Prose, Q_1, Pope et seq.

315. *chance*] *chance the* F_3F_4, Rowe+. *before ?* Thisby...*Louer.*] *before Thisby...Lover ?* Rowe et seq.

316. *comes*] *come* Cap. (corrected in Errata).

317. Om. Qq. After *comes* line 319, Cap. After line 319, Steev.

318, 319. Prose, Qq, Cap. et seq.

322. *Moth*] QqFf, Rowe+, Cap. Steev.'85, Mal. *mote* Heath, Steev.'93 et seq.

323. *better.*] *better: he for a man; God warnd vs: ſhe, for a woman; God bleſſe vs.* Qq (subs.), Coll. Sing. Hal. Dyce, White, Cam. Ktly (all reading *warrant*), Sta. (reading *warn'd*).

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310. **Die**] CAPELL (117 *b*): To make even a lame conundrum of this, you are to suppose that 'die' implies two, as if it came from *duo*.

315. **chance**] See I, i, 139.

317. **Enter**] In this command to the actor to be ready to enter before he has to make his actual appearance on the stage, we have another proof that the Folio was printed from a stage-copy.—ED.

319. **Heere she comes**, &c.] THEOBALD (Nichols, *Illust.* ii, 240): This, I think, should be spoken by Philostrate, and not by Theseus; for the former had seen the interlude rehearsed and consequently knew how it ended. [This was not repeated in Theobald's subsequent edition. He probably remembered that Theseus had seen the Dumb-show.—ED.]

322. **Moth**] See III, i, 168.

323. **better**] See Text. Notes for a line in the Qq here omitted. We have already had a similar omission after III, ii, 364, which was there clearly due to carelessness, inasmuch as the necessary stage-direction 'Exeunt' was included in the omission. But here there is no such proof of carelessness; and the only explanation advanced is

Dem. And thus ſhe meanes, *videlicit.*
This. Aſleepe my Loue? What, dead my Doue?
O *Piramus* ariſe:
Speake, Speake. Quite dumbe? Dead, dead? A tombe
Muſt couer thy ſweet eyes.
Theſe Lilly Lips, this cherry noſe,

325. *meanes*] QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Cam. *moans* Theob. et cet.
325–341. Twenty-three lines, Pope, Han. Twenty-four lines, Theob. et seq.
328. *tombe*] *tumbe* Q_1. *toombe* Q_2.
329. *thy ſweet*] *my ſweet* F_3F_4.
330. *Theſe...noſe*] *This lily lip, This cherry tip* Coll. ii, iii (MS). *This lily brow, This cherry mow* Kinnear. *These ... With cherry tips* Gould.
Lips] *brows* Theob. Warb. Johns. Steev. Sing. Ktly. *toes* Bulloch.

that given first by COLLIER, that the omission was 'possibly on account of the statute against using the name of the Creator, &c., on the stage, 3 Jac. I, ch. 21, which had not passed when the original editions were printed.' This statute, passed in 1605, imposed a penalty of ten pounds on any player who should 'jestingly or prophanely speak or use the holy name of God.' It was, however, so easy to convert 'God bless us' into 'Lord bless us,' and was frequently so converted withal, that this explanation seems hardly adequate, and yet, until a better offers, it must suffice.—STAUNTON conjectures that for *warn'd* we should probably read *ward*, and interprets: 'From such a man, God defend us; from such a woman, God save us.' See Staunton's later note contributed to *The Athenæum*, cited at III, ii, 419.—ED.

324. Does not this remark of Lysander's give us an insight of the way in which Thisbe, like any amateur actor, ran at once to Pyramus's body, without looking to the right or left?—ED.

325. **meanes**] THEOBALD: It should be *moans*, i. e. laments over her dead Pyramus.—STEEVENS: 'Lovers make moan' (line 332) appears to countenance the alteration.—RITSON: But 'means' had anciently the same signification as *moans*. Pinkerton observes that it is a common term in the Scotch law, signifying to *tell*, to *relate*, to *declare;* and the petitions to the lords of session in Scotland run: 'To the lords of council and session humbly means and shows your petitioner.' Here, however, it evidently signifies *complains*. Bills in Chancery begin in a similar manner: 'Humbly complaining sheweth unto your lordship,' &c.—STAUNTON: Theobald's change is, perhaps, without necessity, as 'means' appears formerly to have sometimes borne the same signification. Thus in *Two Gent.* V, iv, 136: 'The more degenerate and base art thou, To make such means for her as thou hast done.'—DYCE (ed. ii): But in this passage [cited by Staunton] 'To *make* such *means*' surely signifies (as Steevens explains it) 'to make such interest for, take such pains about.'—W. A. WRIGHT: *Moans* does not fit in well with 'videlicet.' . . . The old word *mene* is of common occurrence. [Jamieson, *Scotch Dict.*, gives: To Mene, Meane, To utter complaints, to make lamentations. 'If you should die for me, sir knight, There's few for you will meane; For mony a better has died for me, Whose graves are growing green.'—*Minstrelsy Border*, iii, 276. Knowing the propensity which apparently, according to the critics, characterised Shakespeare, how is it that a modern poet has escaped the same condemnation? With this stanza from the *Border Minstrelsy* still in our ears, recall the exquisite line in ANDREW LANG'S *Helen of Troy:* 'O'er Helen's shrine 'the grass is growing green In desolate Therapnae.'—ED.]

Theſe yellow Cowſlip cheekes
Are gone, are gone : Louers make mone :
His eyes were greene as Leekes.
O ſiſters three, come, come to mee,
With hands as pale as Milke,
Lay them in gore, ſince you haue ſhore
With ſheeres, his thred of ſilke.
Tongue not a word : Come truſty ſword :

336. *Lay*] *Lave* Theob. Warb. Johns. 337. *thred*] *threede* Q_4.
337. *his*] *this* F_3F_4, Rowe, Pope, Han.

330. **Lilly . . . nose**] THEOBALD: All Thisby's lamentation till now runs in regular rhyme and metre. I suspect, therefore, the poet wrote 'These lilly *brows*.' Now *black* brows being a beauty, *lilly* brows are as ridiculous as a *cherry* nose, *green* eyes, or *cowslip* cheeks.—MALONE: 'Lips' could scarcely have been mistaken, either by the eye or ear, for *brows*.—FARMER: Theobald's change cannot be right. Thisbe has before celebrated her Pyramus as 'Lilly white of hue.' It should be 'These lips lilly, This nose cherry.' This mode of position adds not a little to the burlesque of the passage.—STEEVENS: We meet with somewhat like this passage in George Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, 1595: '*Huanebango*. Her coral lips, her crimson chin. . . . *Zantippa*. By gogs-bones, thou art a flowting knave: her coral lips, her crimson chin!'—[p. 239, ed. Dyce. I can really see no parallelism here. Huanebango is in earnest; he goes on to speak of her 'silver teeth,' 'her golden hair,' &c., and Zantippa is merely a coarse scold who rails at everybody; had not this citation been repeated in modern editions, it would not have been included here.—ED.]—COLLIER (ed. ii) adopts the change of his MS, 'This lily lip, This cherry tip,' and notes that this was 'in all probability Shakespeare's language, which would have additional comic effect if Thisbe at the same time pointed to the nose of the dead Pyramus.'—R. G. WHITE: Farmer's emendation was ingenious at least. But *nip*, a term which is yet applied to the nose in the nursery, might be mistaken for 'noſe,' written with a long *s*, and it seems to me not improbable that it was so mistaken in this instance. [Of all tasks, that of converting the intentional nonsense of this interlude into sense seems to me the most needless.—ED.]

332. **green as leeks**] In a private letter to Lady Martin, which I am permitted to quote, Mrs ANNA WALTER THOMAS writes: 'I was interested when in Southern Wales to hear an old woman praising the beautiful blue eyes of a child in these words, "mae nhw'n lâs fel y cenin," *i. e.* they are as green as leeks, green and blue having the same word (*glas*, from the same root as our *glaucous*) in Welsh. So Thisbe must have borrowed her phrase from Welsh.'—ED.

334. **O sisters three**] See Malone's note on l. 293, above.

338. **sword**] HALLIWELL (*Memm.* 1879, p. 35): There are reasons for believing that, notwithstanding the general opinion of the unfitness of the *Mid. N. D.* for representation, it was a successful acting play in the seventeenth century. An obscure comedy, at least, would scarcely have furnished Sharpham with the following exceedingly curious allusion, evidently intended as one that would be familiar to the audience, which occurs in his play of *The Fleire*, published in 1607: '*Kni.* And how lives he with 'am? *Fle.* Faith, like Thisbe in the play, 'a has almost kil'd himselfe

Come blade, my breſt imbrue:
And farwell friends, thus *Thisbie* ends;
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Duk. Moon-ſhine & Lion are left to burie the dead.

Deme. I, and Wall too.

Bot. No, I aſſure you, the wall is downe, that parted their Fathers. Will it pleaſe you to ſee the Epilogue, or to heare a Bergomask dance, betweene two of our company?

Duk. No Epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuſe. Neuer excuſe; for when the plaiers are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if hee that writ it had plaid *Piramus*, and hung himſelfe in *Thisbies* garter, it would haue beene a fine Tragedy: and ſo it is truely, and very notably diſcharg'd. But come, your Burgomaske; let your Epilogue alone.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelue.
Louers to bed, 'tis almoſt Fairy time.
I feare we ſhall out-ſleepe the comming morne,

339. [Stabs herself. Dyce.
340. *farwell*] *farewell* QqFf.
341. [Dies. Theob.
344. Bot.] Lyon. Qq.
[Starting up. Cap.
346. *Bergomask*] *Bergomaske* Q_1F_2.
350. *need*] *be* Cap. conj.
350. *Marry*] *Mary* Q_1.
351. *hung*] Ff, Rowe+, White. *hangd* or *hang'd* or *hanged* Qq, Cap. et cet.
354. *Burgomaske*] *Burgomask* F_3F_4, Rowe. *Bergomask* Pope et seq.
[Here a dance of Clowns. Rowe.
A dance by two of the Clowns. White.

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with the scabberd,'—a notice which is also valuable as recording a fragment belonging to the history of the original performance of Shakespeare's comedy, the interlude of the clowns, it may be concluded, having been conducted in the extreme of burlesque, and the actor who represented Thisbe, when he pretends to kill himself, falling upon the scabbard instead of upon the sword. [See C. A. BROWN in *Appendix*.]

344. **Bot.**] COLLIER (ed. ii): The Qq give this speech to *Lion*. Perhaps such was the original distribution, but changed before F_1 was printed, to excite laughter on the resuscitation of Pyramus.

346. **Bergomask**] HANMER (*Gloss.*): A dance after the manner of the peasants of Bergomasco, a country in Italy belonging to the Venetians. All the buffoons in Italy affect to imitate the ridiculous jargon of that people; and from thence it became a custom to mimic also their manner of dancing.—W. A. WRIGHT: If we substitute Bergamo for Bergomasco, Hanmer's explanation is correct. Alberti (*Dizion. Univers.*) says that in Italian 'Bergamasca' is a kind of dance, so called from Bergamo, or from a song which was formerly sung in Florence. The Italian Zanni (our 'zany') is a contraction for Giovanni in the dialect of Bergamo, and is the nickname for a peasant of that place.

As much as we this night haue ouer-watcht. 358
This palpable groffe play hath well beguil'd
The heauy gate of night. Sweet friends to bed. 360
A fortnight hold we this ſolemnity.
In nightly Reuels; and new iollitie. *Exeunt.*

Enter Pucke.

Puck Now the hungry Lyons rores,
And the Wolfe beholds the Moone: 365

359. *palpable groſſe*] QqFf, Rowe+, Coll. Hal. White i. *palpable-gross* Cap. et cet.

360. *gate*] *gaite* Rowe ii, Pope. *gait* Johns. et seq.

362. *Reuels*] *Revel* Rowe, Pope, Theob. Han. Warb.
Scene III. Pope+. Scene II. Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Knt, Coll. Sing. Hal. White i, Sta. Ktly. Scene continued, Dyce, Cam. White ii, Huds. Rlfe.

364. *hungry*] *Hungarian* so quoted by Grey i, 78.
Lyons] *lion* Rowe et seq.

365. *beholds*] QqFf, Rowe, Pope, Steev.'73, '78, '85. *behowls* Warb. et cet.

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360. **gate**] HEATH: I believe our poet wrote *gait*, that is, the tediousness of its progression.—STEEVENS: That is, slow progress. So in *Rich. II:* III, ii, 15: 'And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way.' [*Gait* is here applied metaphorically to hours, as in line 410 it is applied without metaphor to fairies.—ED.]

363. **Enter Pucke**] COLLIER (ed. ii) adds, from his MS, 'with a broom on his shoulder.' 'A broom,' says Collier, 'was unquestionably Puck's usual property on the stage, and as he is represented on the title-page of the old history of his *Mad Pranks*, 1628.'

364. **Now**, &c.] COLERIDGE (p. 104): Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity! So far it is Greek; but then add, O! what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation of, English fancy! In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these thirty lines, or half so rich and imaginative. They form a speckless diamond.

364. **Lyons**] MALONE: It has been justly observed by an anonymous writer that 'among this assemblage of familiar circumstances attending midnight, either in England or its neighbouring kingdoms, Shakespeare would never have thought of intermixing the exotic idea of the "hungry lions roaring," which can be heard no nearer than the deserts of Africa, if he had not read in the 104th Psalm: "Thou makest darkness that it may be *night*, wherein all the beasts of the forest do move; the *lions roaring* after their prey, do seek their meat from God." '—STEEVENS: I do not perceive the justness of the foregoing anonymous writer's observation. Puck, who could 'encircle the earth in forty minutes,' like his fairy mistress, might have snuffed 'the spiced Indian air;' and consequently an image, foreign to Europeans, might have been obvious to him. . . . Our poet, however, inattentive to little proprieties, has sometimes introduced his wild beasts in regions where they are never found. Thus in Arden, a forest in French Flanders, we hear of a lioness, and a bear destroys Antigonus in Bohemia.

365. **beholds**] WARBURTON: I make no question that it should be *behowls*, which is the wolf's characteristic property.—THEOBALD (*Letter to Warburton*, May, 1730,

Whileſt the heauy ploughman ſnores,
All with weary taske fore-done.
Now the waſted brands doe glow,
Whil'ſt the ſcritch-owle, ſcritching loud,
Puts the wretch that lies in woe,
In remembrance of a ſhrowd.
Now it is the time of night,
That the graues, all gaping wide,
Euery one lets forth his ſpright,

366. *Whileſt*] *Whilſt* Qq, Rowe et seq.
367. *fore-done*] *foredoone* Q_2.
369. *ſcritch-owle*] *ſcriech-owle* Q_2. *screech-owl* Coll. Dyce, Hal. White, Cam.
369. *ſcritching*] *ſcrieching* Q_2. *schrieking* Johns. *screeching* Coll. Dyce, Hal. White, Cam.

Nichols, ii, 603): I am prodigiously struck with the justness of your emendation [*behowls*]. I remember no image whatever of the wolf *simply* gazing on the moon; but of the *night-howling* of that beast we have authority from the poets. Virgil, *Georgics*, i, 486: again, *Æneid*, vii, 16. [In Theobald's edition he added] So in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* [Second Part, III, iii], where the whole passage seems to be copied from this of our author: 'Now barkes the wolfe against the full cheekt moon; Now lyons half-clamd entrals roare for food; Now croakes the toad, and night crowes screech aloud, Fluttering 'bout casements of departed soules; Now gapes the graves, and through their yawnes let loose Imprison'd spirits to revisit earth.'—JOHNSON: The alteration is better than the original reading, but perhaps the author meant only to say that the wolf *gazes* at the moon.—MALONE: The word 'beholds' was, in the time of Shakespeare, frequently written *behoulds* (as, I suppose, it was then pronounced), which probably occasioned the mistake. These lines also in Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, Bk i, Canto v, 30, which Shakespeare might have remembered, add support to Warburton's emendation: 'And, all the while she [*Night*] stood upon the ground, The wakefull dogs did never cease to bay; As giving warning of th' unwonted sound, With which her yron wheeles did them affray, And her darke griesly looke them much dismay: The messenger of death, the ghastly owle, With drery shriekes did also her bewray; And hungry wolves continually did howle At her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle.' [If it be assumed that the compositors set up at dictation, the mishearing of 'beholds' for *behowls* is not difficult of comprehension. —ED.]

367. **fore-done**] DYCE: That is, overcome.—ABBOTT, § 441: *For-* is used in two words now disused, 'Forslow no longer.'—*3 Hen. VI:* II, iii, 56; 'She fordid herself.'—*Lear*, V, iii, 256. In both words the prefix has its proper sense of *injury*.—W. A. WRIGHT: 'For' in composition is like the German *ver-*, and has sometimes a negative and sometimes an intensive sense.

369. **scritch-owle**] DYCE (ed. ii): I cannot but wonder that any editor should print here, with Q_2 and Ff, 'scritch' and 'scritching,' when the best of the old eds., Q_1, has *scriech-owle* and *scrieching*.

272. **Now it is**, &c.] STEEVENS: So in *Hamlet*, III, ii, 406: ''Tis now the very witching time of night When church-yards yawn.'

In the Church-way paths to glide.
And we Fairies, that do runne,
By the triple *Hecates* teame,
From the preſence of the Sunne,
Following darkeneſſe like a dreame,
Now are frollicke ; not a Mouſe
Shall diſturbe this hallowed houſe.
I am ſent with broome before,
To ſweep the duſt behinde the doore.

Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with their traine.

Ob. Through the houſe giue glimmering light,

375. *Church-way*] *church-yard* Poole's Eng. Parnassus (ap. Hal.).
381. *hallowed*] *hallow'd* Theob. Warb. et seq.
384. with] with all Q_1.
385, 386. *houſe giue...light, ...fier,*] *house, giv'n...light...fire,* Orger.
385. *the*] *this* Theob. ii, Warb. Johns. Steev. Var. Sing.

373. **That**] See IV, i, 150.

377. **triple Hecates teame**] DOUCE: The chariot of the moon was drawn by two horses, the one black, the other white. 'Hecate' is uniformly a disyllable in Shakespeare, except in *1 Hen. VI:* III, ii, 64. In Spenser and Ben Jonson it is rightly a trisyllable. But Marlowe, though a scholar, and Middleton use it as a disyllable, and Golding has it both ways. [The daughter of Jupiter and Latona was called Luna and Cynthia in heaven, Diana on earth, and Proserpine and Hecate in hell.]

382. **broome**] HALLIWELL: Robin Goodfellow, and the fairies generally, were remarkable for their cleanliness. Reginald Scot thus says of Puck, 'Your grand-dames, maid, were wont to set a boll of milk for him, for (his pains in) grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight.' Compare also Ben Jonson's masque of *Love Restored:* 'Robin Goodfellow, he that sweeps the hearth and the house clean, riddles for the country-maids, and does all their other drudgery.' Having recounted several ineffectual attempts he had made to gain admittance, he adds, 'I e'en went back . . . with my broom and my candles and came on confidently.' The broom and candle were no doubt the principal external characteristics of Robin. In the *Mad Prankes*, 1628, it is stated that he 'would many times walke in the night with a broome on his shoulder.'

383. **doore**] FARMER says that 'To sweep the dust behind the door' is a common expression, and a common practice in large houses, where the doors of halls and galleries are thrown backward, and seldom or never shut.—HALLIWELL, however, gives a more cleanly interpretation. He says that it is 'to sweep away the dust which is behind the door.'

385. **Through . . . light**] JOHNSON: Milton, perhaps, had this picture in his thought: 'And glowing embers through the gloom Teach light to counterfeit a gloom.' —*Il Penseroso*, 79. I think it should be read, 'Through this house *in* glimmering light.'—R. G. WHITE (ed. i, reading *Though*): Plainly, Oberon does not intend to

By the dead and drowſie fier,
Euerie Elfe and Fairie ſpright,
Hop as light as bird from brier,
And this Ditty after me, ſing and dance it trippinglie.
Tita. Firſt rehearſe this ſong by roate,
To each word a warbling note.

386. *fier,*] QqFf, Rowe+, Sta. White. *fire:* Cap. et cet. (subs.).
389. Two lines, Rowe ii et seq. *dance it*] *dance* F_4.
390. Tita.] Queen. Rowe. *this*] *your* Q_1, Cap. Coll. Dyce, Sta. Cam. Ktly, White ii.

command his sprites to 'give glimmering light through the house *by the dead and drowsy fire*,' but to direct every elf and fairy sprite to hop as light as bird from briar, *though* the house give glimmering light by the dead and drowsy fire.—DYCE (ed. ii): A most perplexing passage. R. G. White's reading and note, I must confess, are to me not quite intelligible. Lettsom conjectures, 'Through *this hall go* glimmering light,' &c.—HUDSON: R. G. White's reading and note seem rather to darken what is certainly none too light. Lettsom's conjecture is both ingenious and poetical in a high degree. . . . I suspect that 'By' is simply to be taken as equivalent to *by means of*. Taking it so, I fail to perceive anything very dark or perplexing in the passage. —D. WILSON (p. 260): My conjectural reading involves no great literal variation: 'Through the *house-wives'* glimmering light.' The couplet of Puck, which immediately precedes, sufficiently harmonises with such an idea, where with broom he sweeps the dust behind the door.—KINNEAR (p. 100) would read '—the house *gives* glimmering light *Now* the dead and drowsy fire,' &c., and remarks: '"The dead and drowsy fire" tells the hour to the fairies,—so Puck says, l. 368, "Now the wasted brands do glow." He repeats "Now" four times, *emphasising the hour*, ending with l. 380, "And we fairies. . . . *Now* are frolic." Oberon himself repeats the word, l. 395, "*Now*, until the break of day," &c. The whole context indicates that *Now* is the true reading. [I think it escaped the notice of Dyce and Hudson that R. G. White, in his text, restores the punctuation of the QqFf, and that it was Capell who first closed, more or less, the sentence at 'fire,' which I think is wrong; it increases the obscurity, which will still remain in spite of Hudson's interpretation of 'by,' its commonest interpretation, and it will still be perplexing to know how it is the fairies who give the glimmering light when it is given by means of the drowsy fire, unless the fairies carry the fire about with them, which is not likely. R. G. White's emendation, obtained by an insignificant change, is to me satisfactory: 'Albeit there is but a faint, glimmering light throughout the house, yet there is enough by means of the dead and drowsy fire for every Elf and Fairy to hop and sing and dance.'—ED.]

388. **brier**] STEEVENS: This comparison is a very ancient one, being found in one of the poems of Lawrence Minot, p. 31—[ed. Ritson, ap. W. A. Wright]: 'That are was blith als brid on brere.'

389. **it trippinglie**] This 'it' may be, as ABBOTT, § 226 says, used indefinitely, like 'daub it,' or 'queen it,' or 'prince it'; but here it is not impossible that it refers to the ditty, which was to be both sung and danced.—KNIGHT calls attention to the use by Shakespeare of 'trip' as the fairies' pace; it is so used in IV, i, 107. Milton's use of it for the dances of the Nymphs and the Graces in *L'Allegro* and *Comus* will occur to every one.—ED.

Hand in hand, with Fairie grace,
Will we ſing and bleſſe this place.

The Song.

Now vntill the breake of day,
Through this houſe each Fairy ſtray.
To the beſt Bride-bed will we,
Which by vs ſhall bleſſed be:

394. Om. Qq. Song and Dance. Cap. 395–416. In Roman, and given to Oberon, Qq, Johns. et seq.

394. **The Song**] JOHNSON: [This Song] I have restored to Oberon, as it apparently contains not the blessing which he intends to bestow on the bed, but his declaration that he will bless it, and his orders to the Fairies how to perform the necessary rites. But where then is the Song?—I am afraid it is gone with many other things of greater value. The truth is that two songs are lost. The series of the Scene is this: after the speech of Puck, Oberon enters and calls his Fairies to a song, which song is apparently wanting in all the copies. Next Titania leads another song, which is indeed lost like the former, though the Editors have endeavoured to find it. Then Oberon dismisses his Fairies to the despatch of the ceremonies. The songs I suppose were lost, because they were not inserted in the players' parts, from which the drama was printed.—CAPELL [whose *Notes* were written before he had read Johnson's edition]: That [lines 395–416] cannot be a Song is clear, even to demonstration, from the measure, the matter, and very air of every part of it; on the other hand, it is as clear that a song, or something in nature of a song, must have come in here; but, if this is not it, what are we to do for it? The manner in which Oberon in his first speech, and the queen in her reply, express themselves, may incline some to conjecture that this, which is at present before us, was designed by its Author to be delivered in a kind of recitative, danced to by Titania and her train, and accompanied with their voices; but the arguments against its being a song are almost equally forcible against its being recitative; and the word 'Now' seems to argue a song preceding. Possibly such a one did exist; but Shakespeare, not being pleased with it, nor yet inclined to mend it, scratched it out of his copy, and printed off the play without one, as we see in the Qq; and his friends, the players—sensible of the defect, but having nothing at hand to mend it—supplied it injudiciously in the manner above recited. If this simple but beautiful play should ever be brought on the stage, the insertion of some light song—in character and suited to the occasion—would do credit to a manager's judgment, and honour to the poet who should compose it. [This last remark is noteworthy as a revelation of the influence, even on so conservative an editor as Capell, of an age which still believed that Shakespeare's 'wood-notes' were 'wild,' and that they could be not only improved by cultivation, but so successfully imitated as to elude detection. See Fleay's note, line 417 below, where another explanation of this discrepancy between the Qq and Ff is given.—ED.]

398. **blessed be**] STEEVENS: So in Chaucer's *Marchantes Tale*, line 9693, ed. Tyrwhitt [line 575, ed. Morris]: 'And whan the bed was with the prest i-blessid.' We learn also from 'Articles ordained by King Henry VII. for the Regulation of his Household' that this ceremony was observed at the marriage of a Princess: 'All men at her comming to be voided, except woemen, till she be brought to her bedd; and

And the iſſue there create,
Euer ſhall be fortunate:
So ſhall all the couples three,
Euer true in louing be:
And the blots of Natures hand,
Shall not in their iſſue ſtand.
Neuer mole, harelip, nor ſcarre,
Nor marke prodigious, ſuch as are
Deſpiſed in Natiuitie,
Shall vpon their children be.
With this field dew conſecrate,

408, 409. be. With...conſecrate,] *be, With...conſecrate.* Coll. ii, iii (MS).

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the man both; he sittinge in his bedd in his shirte, with a gowne cast aboute him. Then the Bishoppe, with the Chaplaines, to come in, and blesse the bedd.'—DOUCE: Blessing the bed was observed at *all* marriages. This was the form, copied from the Manual for the use of Salisbury: 'Nocte vero sequente cum sponsus et sponsa ad lectum pervenerint, accedat sacerdos et benedicat thalamum, dicens: Benedic, Domine, thalamum istum et omnes habitantes in eo; ut in tua pace consistant, et in tua voluntate permaneant: et in amore tuo vivant et senescant et multiplicentur in longitudine dierum. Per Dominum.—Item benedictio super lectum. Benedic, Domine, hoc cubiculum, respice, quinon dormis neque dormitas. Qui custodis Israel, custodi famulos tuos in hoc lecto quiescentes ab omnibus fantasmaticis demonum illusionibus: custodi eos vigilantes ut in preceptis tuis meditentur dormientes, et te per soporem sentiant: ut hic et ubique defensionis tuae muniantur auxilio. Per Dominum.—Deinde fiat benedictio super eos in lecto tantum cum Oremus. Benedicat Deus corpora vestra et animas vestras; et det super vos benedictionem sicut benedixit Abraham, Isaac, et Jacob, Amen.—His peractis aspergat eos aqua benedicta, et sic discedat et dimittat eos in pace.'—W. A. WRIGHT: Compare *The Romans of Partenay*, or *Melusine* (ed. Skeat), ll. 1009–11: 'Forsooth A Bisshop which that tyme ther was Signed and blessid the bedde holyly; "In nomine dei," so said in that place.'

399. **create**] For a long list of participles like the present word, and 'consecrate,' in line 409, where *-ed* is omitted after *t* or *d*, see ABBOTT, § 342.

408, 409. **be. . . . consecrate,**] COLLIER (*Notes*, &c., p. 111): The MS puts a comma after 'be' and a period after 'consecrate,' thus meaning that none of these disfigurements shall be seen on the children consecrated with this field-dew. Then begins a new sentence, which is judiciously altered in two words by the MS—namely, in line 413 it reads: 'Ever shall *it safely* rest.' [The reading of Rowe ii.—ED.] The question is whether the fairies or the issue of the different couples are to be 'consecrate' with the 'field-dew,' and there seems no reason why such delicate and immortal beings should require it, while children might need it, to secure them from 'marks prodigious.'—DYCE (ed. ii): Collier altogether misunderstands the line, which means 'with this *consecrated field-dew*,' i. e. fairy holy-water; and when he adds that the field-dew was intended for 'the children,' he most unaccountably forgets that as 'the couples three' have only just retired to their respective bridal chambers, the usual period must elapse before the birth of 'the children,' by which time 'THIS field-

Euery Fairy take his gate,
And each ſeuerall chamber bleſſe,
Through this Pallace with ſweet peace,
Euer ſhall in ſafety reſt,
And the owner of it bleſt.
Trip away, make no ſtay;
Meet me all by breake of day.

410. *gate*] *gait* Johns. et seq.
413, 414. Transposed, White, Sta. Huds. Ktly.
413. Euer ſhall in ſafety] *Ever shall it safely* Rowe ii+, Cap. Steev.'85, Sing. ii, Coll. ii, iii (MS). *E'er shall it in safety* Mal.'90, Steev. Sing. *Ever shall 't in safety* Dyce ii, iii.
414. Two lines, Johns.
of it] *of 't* Han.
415. away] *away then* Han.
416. [Exeunt. Qq. Exeunt King, Queen and Train. Cap.

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dew' (so very prematurely provided) was not unlikely to lose its virtue, and even to evaporate, though in the keeping of fairies.

409, &c. D. WILSON (p. 260): Arranged in the following order, the consecutive relation of ideas seems to be more clearly expressed: 'Through this palace with sweet peace Every fairy take his gait, And each several chamber bless, With this field-dew consecrate; And the owners of it blest, Ever shall in safety rest,' &c.

409. **field dew**] DOUCE: There seems to be in this line a covert satire against holy water. Whilst the popular confidence in the power of fairies existed they had obtained the credit of doing much good service to mankind; and the great influence which they possessed gave so much offence to the holy monks that they determiued to exert all their power to expel the imaginary beings from the minds of the people by taking the office of the fairies' benedictions entirely into their own hands. Of this we have a curious proof in the beginning of Chaucer's tale of *The Wife of Bath*.

410. **gate**] See line 360.

413, 414. **Euer . . . blest.**] STAUNTON: I at one time thought 'Ever shall' a misprint for *Every hall*, but it has since been suggested to me by Mr Singer, and by an anonymous correspondent, that the difficulty in the passage arose from the printer's having transposed the lines.—R. G. WHITE (ed. i): It was not until May, 1856, that the difficulty received its easy solution at the hands of a correspondent of the London *Illustrated News*, who signed his communication C. R. W. [Probably the 'anonymous correspondent' referred to by Staunton, who had then the charge of one of the columns in *The Illustrated News*.—ED.] This emendation is at once the simplest and the most consistent with the form and spirit of the context.—DYCE (ed. ii): I cannot agree with R. G. White in his estimate of this emendation; I must be allowed to prefer my own correction—the addition of a single letter. And compare the words of the supposed Fairy Queen concerning Windsor Castle: 'Strew good luck, ouphs, on every sacred room; *That it may stand till the perpetual doom*, In state [seat?] as wholesome as in state 'tis fit, Worthy the owner, and the owner it.'—*Merry Wives* V, v.—HALLIWELL: The original, in line 413, is probably correct, the nominative *palace*, being understood.—KEIGHTLEY (p. 137): This is the third or, rather, fourth

Robin. If we ſhadowes haue offended,
Thinke but this (and all is mended)
That you haue but ſlumbred heere,
While theſe viſions did appeare.
And this weake and idle theame,

417. Epilogue. Hal. Robin.] Puck. Rowe.
418. *but this (and*] *but (this, and* F_3F_4. *but this, and* Rowe et seq.
420. *theſe*] *this* Q_2.

transposition in this play. We may observe that twice before it was the second line of the couplet that commenced with 'Ever.' For a fifth transposition in the original eds., see III, i, 146.

417, &c. FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p. 182): The traces of the play having been altered from a version for the stage are numerous. There is a double ending. Robin's final speech is palpably a stage-epilogue, while what precedes, from '*Enter Puck*' to 'break of day—*Exeunt*,' is very appropriate for a marriage entertainment, but scarcely suited for the stage. In Acts IV and V again we find the speech-prefixes *Duke, Duchess, Clown* for *Theseus, Hippolita, Bottom;* such variations are nearly always marks of alteration, the unnamed characters being anterior in date. In the prose scenes speeches are several times assigned to wrong speakers, another common mark of alteration. In the Fairies the character of Moth (Mote) has been excised in the text, though he still remains among the *dramatis personæ*. [This statement is to me inexplicable. When Titania summons four fairies (among them Moth) there are four replies. In neither Quartos nor Folios is there a list of *dramatis personæ*.—ED.] It is not, I think, possible to say which parts of the play were added for the Court performance, but a careful examination has convinced me that wherever *Robin* occurs in the stage-directions or speech-prefixes scarcely any, if any, alteration has been made; *Puck*, on the contrary, indicates change. [Be it remembered that in this allusion to 'the Court performance' no special occasion is intended, for none has been recorded, but FLEAY, throughout his *History of the London Stage*, is emphatic in his assertion of 'the absolute subordination of public performances to Court presentations' (*Introd.* p. 11). In proper obedience to this belief he assumes, therefore, a Court performance in the present case. This opinion, that additions were made for a Court performance, Fleay subsequently deserted. See *Date of Composition, post.* —ED.]

417. **shadowes**] HUNTER (i, 298): Here we have a reference to a sentiment in the play: 'The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse if imagination amend them,' an apology for the actor and a compliment for the critic. What the poet had put into the mouth of one of the characters in respect of the poor attempts of the Athenian clowns, he now, by the repetition of the word 'shadows,' in effect says for himself and his companions. 'Shadows' is a beautiful term by which to express actors, those whose life is a perpetual personation, a semblance but of something real, a shadow only of actual experiences. The idea of this resemblance was deeply inwrought in the mind of the poet and actor. When at a later period he looked upon man again as but 'a walking shadow,' his mind immediately passed to the long-cherished thought, and he proceeds: 'A poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage And then is heard no more.'

No more yeelding but a dreame,
Centles, doe not reprehend.
If you pardon, we will mend.
And as I am an honeſt *Pucke*,
If we haue vnearned lucke,
Now to ſcape the Serpents tongue,
We will make amends ere long:
Elſe the *Pucke* a lyar call.
So good night vnto you all.
Giue me your hands, if we be friends,
And *Robin* ſhall reſtore amends.

422. *more yeelding*] *mere idling* D. Wilson.
423. *Centles*] *Gentles* QqFf.
425. *I am*] *I'm* Cap. Steev. Mal. Var. Coll. White i, Dyce ii, iii, Ktly.
425. *an*] Om. F_3F_4, Rowe+.
429. *lyar*] *lyer* Q_1.
432. [Exeunt omnes. Rowe.

422. **dreame**] Compare the Prologue to Lily's *The Woman in the Moone*, 1597: 'This but the shadow of our author's dreame, Argues the substance to be neere at hand; At whose appearance I most humbly crave, That in your forehead she may read content. If many faults escape in her discourse, Remember all is but a poet's dreame.'—p. 151, ed. Fairholt.—ED.

425. **honest Pucke**] COLLIER: 'Puck' or *Pouke* is a name of the devil, and as Tyrwhitt remarks [II, i, 39] it is used in that sense in *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, and elsewhere. It was therefore necessary for Shakespeare's fairy messenger to assert his honesty, and to clear himself from any connexion with the 'helle Pouke.' ['Honest' here refers merely to his veracity, as is shown by line 429.—ED.]

426. **vnearned**] STEEVENS: That is, if we have better fortune than we have deserved.

427. **Serpents tongue**] JOHNSON: That is, if we be dismissed without hisses.—STEEVENS: So in Markham's *English Arcadia*, 1607: 'But the nymph, after the custom of distrest tragedians, whose first act is entertained with a snaky salutation,' &c.

431. **Giue . . . hands**] JOHNSON: That is, clap your hands. Give us your applause. Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts in their various modes are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed.

432. **amends**] Unwarrantably 'apprehending' (Theseus would say) that in the second syllable of 'am*ends*' there is a punning allusion to the *end* of the play, SIMROCK (Hildburghausen, 1868) takes the liberty thus to translate:

'Gute Nacht! Klatscht in die Hände,
Dass den Dank euch Ruprecht sp——
Ende. (Exit.)'

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE TEXT

THE TEXT is so fully discussed in the *Preface* to this volume that little remains to be added, except the opinions of two or three editors, and an account of an alleged *Third Quarto*. From the days of Dr JOHNSON all editors mention, with more or less fullness and accuracy, the Quartos and Folios, but KNIGHT is the earliest, I think, to express an opinion as to the degree of excellence with which the TEXT of this play has been transmitted to us. Although I have given the substance of his note at V, i, 115, I think it best to repeat it here.

'One thing is clear to us,' says KNIGHT (*Introductory Notice*, p. 331, 1840?), 'that the original of these editions [*i. e.* the two Quartos], whichever it might be, was 'printed from a genuine copy, and carefully superintended through the press. The 'text appears to us as perfect as it is possible to be, considering the state of typography 'of that day. There is one remarkable evidence of this. The Prologue to the inter-'lude of the Clowns in the Fifth Act is purposely made inaccurate in its punctuation 'throughout. The speaker "does not stand upon points." It was impossible to have 'effected the object better than by the punctuation of [Q_2]; and this is precisely one 'of those matters of nicety in which a printer would have failed, unless he had fol-'lowed an extremely clear copy, or his proofs had been corrected by an author or an 'editor.'

R. G. WHITE (ed. i, p. 18, 1857): 'Fortunately, all of these editions [Q_1, Q_2, and 'F_1] were printed quite carefully for books of their class at that day; and the cases 'in which there is admissible doubt as to the reading are comparatively few, and, 'with one or two exceptions, unimportant.'

Rev. H. N. HUDSON (*Introduction*, p. 1, 1880): 'In all three of these copies [the 'Quartos and Folio] the printing is remarkably clear and correct for the time, inso-'much that modern editors have little difficulty about the text. Probably none of the 'Poet's dramas has reached us in a more satisfactory state.'

In 1841 HALLIWELL stated (*An Introd. to Sh.'s Mid. N. D.* p
'in his work entitled *The British Theatre*, 12mo. Dublin, 1
'titles and dates of the early editions of Shakespeare's Pla
'*A moste pleasaunte comedie, called A Midsummer Night's D*
'*of the fayries*, stated to have been published in the year 1595.
'this date or under this title has yet been discovered. It is
'state that Steevens and others have pronounced many of the
'has given to be fictitious.'

Hunter, biased, possibly, by an innocent desire to fix
the only critic who has a good word for Chetwood, whose
in light esteem. HUNTER asks (*New Illust.* i, 283): 'I

'ever been examined in a fair and critical spirit, or do we dismiss them on the mere 'force of personal authority brought to bear against them? A copy cannot be pro- 'duced; but neither could a copy of the first edition of *Hamlet* be produced in the 'time of Steevens and Malone; yet it would have been a mistaken conclusion that 'no such edition existed because neither of those commentators had seen a copy. 'Chetwood gives the title somewhat circumstantially, as if he had seen a copy; and 'if some of his traditions may be shewn to be unfounded, if he may be proved to 'have been credulous, or even something worse, his writings contain some truth, and 'we cannot perhaps easily draw the line which shall separate that which is worthy 'of belief from that which is to be rejected without remorse.'

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, iv) gives to Chetwood the *coup de grace* in the present instance: 'the spelling of "wythe" is sufficient to condemn the title as spurious.'

DATE OF COMPOSITION

It is stated in the *Preface* that the following lines and allusions furnish internal evidence of the *Date of Composition*:—

1. '*Thorough bush, thorough briar.*'—II, i, 5;

2. Titania's description of the disastrous effects on the weather and harvests caused by the quarrel between her and Oberon.—II, i, 94–120;

3. '*And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.*'—II, i, 14;

4. '*One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold.*'—V, i, 11;

5. A poem of *Pyramus and Thisbe.*

6. The date of Spenser's *Faerie Queene.*

7. The ancient privilege of Athens, whereby Egeus claims the disposal of his daughter either to give her in marriage or to put her to death.—I, i, 49;

8. '*The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death of learning, late deceast in beggerie.*'—V, i, 59;

9. And, finally, that the play was intended for the celebration of a noble marriage.

These will now be dealt with in their foregoing order:

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1. 'THOROUGH BUSH, THOROUGH BRIAR.'—II, i, 5.

CAPELL in 1767 (i, *Introd.* p. 64) said: 'if that pretty fantastical poem of Dray- 'ton's, call'd—"*Nymphidia or The Court of Fairy*," be early enough in time (as, I 'believe, it is; for I have seen an edition of that author's pastorals printed in 1593, 'quarto) it is not improbable, that Shakespeare took from thence the hint of his 'fairies: a line of that poem "Thorough bush, thorough briar" occurs also in his 'play.'

In the *Variorum* edition of 1773, STEEVENS asserted that Drayton's *Nymphidia* 'was printed in 1593,' but in the next *Variorum* the assertion was withdrawn, and no decisive conclusion as to the priority of Drayton or Shakespeare was reached, until MALONE, in the *Variorum* of 1821, settled the question in a note on 'Hob-

goblin,' II, i, 39, as follows:—'A copy of certain poems of this author [Drayton], '*The Batail of Agincourt, Nymphidia*, &c., published in 1627, which is in the col- 'lection of my friend, Mr. Bindley, puts the matter beyond a doubt; for in one of 'the blank leaves before the book, the author has written, as follows: "To the noble '"Knight, my most honored ffrend, Sir Henry Willoughby, one of the selected '"patrons of *thes my latest poems*, from his servant, Mi. Drayton."'

Drayton having been thus disposed of, a new claimant to priority was brought forward. 'There seems to be a certainty,' says HALLIWELL (*Memoranda*, 1879, p. 6), 'that Shakespeare, in the composition of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, had in one 'place a recollection of the Sixth Book of *The Faerie Queene*, published in 1596, for 'he all but literally quotes the following [line 285] from the Eighth Canto of that 'book:—"Through hils and dales, through bushes and through breres,"—*Faerie* '*Queene*, ed. 1596, p. 460. As the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was not printed 'until the year 1600, and it is impossible that Spenser could have been present at 'any representation of the comedy before he had written the Sixth Book of the '*Faerie Qucene*, it may be fairly concluded that Shakespeare's play was not composed 'at the earliest before the year 1596, in fact, not until some time after January the '20th, 1595-6, on which day the Second Part of the *Faerie Queene* was entered on 'the books of the Stationers' Company. The sixth book of that poem was probably 'written as early as 1592 or 1593, certainly in Ireland, and at some considerable time 'before the month of November, 1594, the date of the entry of publication of the '*Amoretti*, in the eightieth sonnet of which it is distinctly alluded to as having been 'completed previously to the composition of the latter work.'

This opinion Halliwell saw no reason to retract; he repeats it almost word for word in his *Outlines* (1885, p. 500). But it does not meet FLEAY'S approval. 'Mr 'Halliwell's fancy that Spenser's line . . . must have been imitated by Shakespeare '. . . is very flimsy; hill and dale, bush and brier, are commonplaces of the time.'—*Life and Work*, p. 186. They have been commonplaces ever since, unquestionably, and doubtless FLEAY could have furnished many examples from contemporary authors or he would not have made the assertion. 'Nor is there any proof,' Fleay goes on to say, 'that this song could not have been transmitted to Ireland in 1593 or 1594.' But what, we may ask, would have been the object in transmitting a 'commonplace'? I quite agree with Fleay that there is small likelihood in HALLIWELL'S suggestion, but is it quite fair to scoff at a 'fancy,' and in the same breath propose another, such as the 'transmission to Ireland'?

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2. TITANIA'S DESCRIPTION OF THE PERVERTED SEASONS.—II, i, 86–120.

As this item of internal evidence still walks about the orb like the sun, it deserves strict attention, and to that end, for the convenience of the reader, the whole passage is here recalled:—

'And neuer ſince the middle Summers ſpring
'Met vve on hil, in dale, forreſt, or mead,
* * * * *
'But vvith thy braules thou haſt diſtubrb'd our ſport.
'Therefore the Windes, piping to vs in vaine,
'As in reuenge, haue ſuck'd vp from the ſea
'Contagious fogges: Which falling in the Land,

'Hath euerie petty Riuer made ſo proud,
'That they haue ouer-borne their Continents.
'The oxe hath therefore ſtretch'd his yoake in vaine,
'The Ploughman loſt his ſweat, and the greene Corne
'Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:
'The fold ſtands empty in the drowned field,
'And Crowes are fatted vvith the murrion flocke,
'The nine mens Morris is fild vp with mud,
'And the queint Mazes in the wanton greene,
'For lacke of tread are vndiſtinguiſhable.
'The humane mortals want their winter heere,
'No night is now with hymne or caroll bleſt;
'Therefore the Moone (the gouerneſſe of floods)
'Pale in her anger, washes all the aire;
'That Rheumaticke diſeaſes doe abound.
'And through this diſtemperature, we ſee
'The ſeaſons alter; hoared headed froſts
'Fall in the freſh lap of the crimſon Roſe,
'And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icie crowne,
'An odorous Chaplet of ſweet Sommer buds
'Is as in mockery ſet. The Spring, the Sommer,
'The childing Autumne, angry Winter change
'Their wonted Liueries, and the mazed world,
'By their increaſe, now knowes not which is which;
'And this ſame progeny of euils,
'Comes from our debate, from our diſſention.'

'The confusion of seasons here described,' said STEEVENS, in 1773, 'is no more 'than a poetical account of the weather which happened in England about the time 'when this play was first published. For this information I am indebted to chance, 'which furnished me with a few leaves of an old meteorological history.' This assertion that the 'old meteorological history' applied to the weather about the time this play was published, that is, about 1600, STEEVENS repeated in 1778 and in 1785, but in 1793, having adopted MALONE'S chronology of the *Date of Composition*, which placed this play in 1592, STEEVENS silently changed the application of his 'old meteorological history' to the weather eight years earlier, and said that his few leaves referred to the weather 'about the time the play was *written*.' [Italics, mine.] 'The 'date of the season,' STEEVENS goes on to say, 'may be better determined by a 'description of the same weather in Churchyard's *Charitie*, 1595, when, says he, '"a '"colder season, in all sorts, was never seene." He then proceeds to say the same 'over again in rhyme:—

'"A colder time in world was neuer seene:
'"The skies do lowre, the sun and moone waxe dim;
'"Sommer scarce knowne but that the leaues are greene.
'"The winter's waste driues water ore the brim;
'"Upon the land great flotes of wood may swim.
'"Nature thinks scorne to do hir dutie right
'"Because we haue displeasde the Lord of Light."

'Let the reader compare these lines with Shakespeare's, and he will find that they 'are both descriptive of the same weather and its consequences.'

It was, however, BLAKEWAY who, in a note in the *Variorum of '21* (vol. v, p. 342), adduced yet more conclusive proofs of the extremely bad weather in 1593 and 1594, which he found in extracts, printed by Strype (*Ann.* v, iv, p. 211), from 'Dr 'King's *Lectures*, preached at York.' As W. A. WRIGHT, in his *Preface* to the present play, has given the extracts from the Lectures themselves, I prefer, where I can, to follow Wright, as more exact. From the second of a series of *Lectures upon Ionas*, delivered at York in 1594 and published in 1618, the following extract, from p. 36, is given: 'The moneths of the year haue not yet gone about, 'wherein the Lord hath bowed the heauens, and come down amongst vs with more 'tokens and earnests of his wrath intended, then the agedst man of our land is able 'to recount of so small a time. For say, if euer the windes, since they blew one 'against the other, haue beene more common, & more tempestuous, as if the foure 'endes of heauen had conspired to turne the foundations of the earth vpside downe; 'thunders and lightnings neither seasonable for the time, and withall most terrible, 'with such effects brought forth, that the childe vnborne shall speake of it. The 'anger of the clouds hath beene powred downe vpon our heads, both with abundance 'and (sauing to those that felt it) with incredible violence; the aire threatned our 'miseries with a blazing starre; the pillers of the earth tottered in many whole coun-'tries and tracts of our Ilande; the arrowes of a woeful pestilence haue beene cast 'abroad at large in all the quarters of our realme, euen to the emptying and dispeo-'pling of some parts thereof; treasons against our Queene and countrey wee haue 'knowne many and mighty, monstrous to bee imagined, from a number of Lyons 'whelps, lurking in their dennes and watching their houre, to vndoe vs; our expecta-'tion and comfort so fayled vs in France, as if our right armes had beene pulled from 'our shoulders.' 'The marginal note,' adds WRIGHT, 'to this passage shews the date 'to which it refers: "The yeare of the Lord 1593 and 1594."'

HALLIWELL added (*Introd. to A Mid. N. D.* 1841, p. 8) some passages from Stowe, under date of 1594, confirming the pudder of the elements in that year: 'In 'this moneth of March was many great stormes of winde, which ouerturned trees, 'steeples, barnes, houses, &c., namely, in Worcestershire, in Beaudley forrest many 'Oakes were ouerturned. In Horton wood of the said shire more then 1500 Oakes 'were ouerthrowen in one day, namely, on the thursday next before Palmesunday. '... The 11. of Aprill, a raine continued very sore more than 24. houres long and 'withall, such a winde from the north, as pearced the wals of houses, were they neuer 'so strong.... In the moneth of May, namely, on the second day, came downe great 'water flouds, by reason of sodaine showres of haile and raine that had fallen, which 'bare downe houses, yron milles.... This yeere in the moneth of May, fell many 'great showres of raine, but in the moneths of June and July, much more; for it 'commonly rained euerie day, or night, till S. *Iames* day, and two daies after togither 'most extreamly, all which, notwithstanding in the moneth of August there followed 'a faire haruest, but in the moneth of September fell great raines, which raised high 'waters, such as staied the carriages, and bare downe bridges, at Cambridge, Ware, 'and elsewhere, in many places. Also the price of graine grewe to be such, as a 'strike or bushell of Rie was sold for fiue shillings, a bushel of wheat for sixe, seuen, 'or eight shillings, &c., for still it rose in price, which dearth happened (after the 'common opinion) more by meanes of ouermuch transporting, by our owne merchants 'for their priuate gaine, than through the vnseasonablenesse of the weather passed.'

—*Annales*, ed. 1600, p. 1274–9. (I have added two or three sentences not given by Halliwell nor by Wright.)

Yet another testimony to these same meteorological disturbances is given by HALLIWELL (*Ibid.* p. 6), from Dr Simon Forman's MS (No. 384, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), where that unabashed astrologer, who foretold the day of his own death, and had the grace to fulfill the prophecy, has the following 'important observations,' as Halliwell terms them, on the year 1594: 'Ther was moch sicknes but lyttle death, 'moch fruit and many plombs of all sorts this yeare and small nuts, but fewe walnuts. 'This monethes of June and July were very wet and wonderfull cold like winter, that 'the 10. dae of Julii many did syt by the fyer, yt was so cold; and soe was yt in 'Maye and June; and scarce too fair dais together all that tyme, but yt rayned every 'day more or lesse. Yf yt did not raine, then was yt cold and cloudye. Mani murders were done this quarter. There were many gret fludes this sommer, and about 'Michelmas, thorowe the abundaunce of raine that fell sodeinly; the brige of Ware 'was broken downe, and at Stratford Bowe, the water was never seen so byg as yt was; 'and in the lattere end of October, the waters burste downe the bridg at Cambridge. 'In Barkshire were many gret waters, wherewith was moch harm done sodenly.'

But the year 1594 is not to have all the bad weather; it would be poverty-stricken indeed if one and the same speech in any of Shakespeare's plays could not furnish at least two divergent opinions. Accordingly, we find CHALMERS (*Supp. Apology*, p. 368) maintaining that Titania's words refer to the fact that 'the prices of corn rose to 'a great height in 1597,' this, together with other items, to be hereafter duly mentioned, 'fixes the epoch,' according to Chalmers, 'of this fairy play to the beginning 'of the year 1598.'

As to the estimate which modern editors put on the value of these allusions by Titania in fixing the date of the play, KNIGHT, in his edition (*circa* 1840), is mildly tolerant of the weather, and thinks that the peculiarly ungenial seasons of 1593–4 'may have suggested Titania's beautiful description'; but in his *Biography* (1843, p. 360) there is the shrewd remark that 'Stowe's record that, in 1594, "notwithstanding '"in the moneth of August there followed a faire haruest," does not agree with "The '"ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain, The ploughman lost his sweat, and '"the green corn hath rotted, ere his youth attained a beard."' 'It is not necessary,' concludes KNIGHT, 'to fix Shakspere's description of the ungenial season upon 1594 'in particular.'

HALLIWELL in his *Introduction*, in 1841, set great store by his witness, Dr. Forman, and by what was to be found in the *Variorum of 1821*, but 'grizzling hair the 'brain doth clear,' and in his folio edition in 1856 he says that the 'presumed allu-'sions to contemporary events are scarcely entitled to assume the dignity of evi-'dences.' Amongst these 'presumed allusions,' however, he acknowledges that the ungenial seasons referred to in Titania's speech may be, perhaps, 'considered the 'most important.' In his *Memoranda*, 1879 (p. 5), which we may accept as his final judgment, he asserts that 'the accounts of the bad weather of 1594 are valueless in 'the question of the chronology.'

COLLIER, in both his editions, alludes to Stowe and Forman, but expresses no opinion.

DYCE in all his editions, First, Second, and Third, with outspoken British honesty (and, for that vacillating editor, extraordinary unanimity withal), pronounced the supposition that the words of Titania allude to the state of the weather in England, in 1594, 'ridiculous.'

GRANT WHITE, in his First Edition (1857, p. 15), thinks that there is 'no room 'for reasonable doubt' that the date of Titania's speech is decided by the citations from Stowe and Forman. In his Second Edition, having in the mean time taken advice on the subject of Notes, as he tells us (*Preface*, p. xii), 'of his washerwoman,' he does not refer to the matter at all,—naturally, any allusion to a season when there were no 'drying days' could not but be extremely distasteful to his coadjutor.

STAUNTON (1857), while acknowledging that Titania's fine description 'is singu-'larly applicable to a state of things prevalent in England in 1593 and 1594,' is 'not 'disposed to attach much importance to these coincidences as settling the date of 'the play.'

KURZ makes an observation which is not without weight. 'A wide-spread calam-'ity,' he remarks (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, iv, 268, 1869), 'would have been, according to the 'ideas of those times, a topic more appropriate to the pulpit [as it really was there 'treated.—ED.] than to the stage; and, according to the ideas of *all* times, most 'inappropriate to the *comic* stage. We go to the theatre to forget our burdens; and 'he who in the midst of a gay, joyous play, without the smallest need, reminds us 'that our fields are submerged, our harvests ruined, and man and beast plague-'stricken, may rest assured that he will not catch us again very soon seated in front 'of his stage.'

HUDSON (1880) does 'not quite see' these allusions as Dyce sees them, 'albeit I 'am apt enough to believe most of the play was written before that date [1594] 'And surely, the truth of the allusion being granted, all must admit that passing 'events have seldom been turned to better account in the service of poetry.'

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. vi) reprints the passages from Dr. King and Stowe at length, 'if only for the purpose of showing that in all probability Shakespeare had 'not the year 1594 in his mind at all.' Notwithstanding the accounts of the direful weather in that year, there followed 'a faire harvest,' and the 'subsequent high 'prices of corn are attributed not to a deficiency of the crop, but to the avarice of 'merchants exporting it for their own gain. Now this does not agree with Titania's 'description of the fatal consequences of her quarrel with Oberon, through which '"The green corn Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard." In this point alone 'there is such an important discrepancy, that if Shakespeare referred to any particular 'season we may, without doubt, affirm it was not to the year 1594, and therefore the 'passages [from King, and Stowe, and Forman] have no bearing upon the date of 'the play. I am even sceptical enough to think that Titania's speech not only does 'not describe the events of the year 1594, or of the other bad seasons which hap-'pened at this time, but that it is purely the product of the poet's own imagination, 'and that the picture which it presents had no original in the world of fact, any more 'than Oberon's bank or Titania's bower.'

Rev. H. P. STOKES (*Chronological Order*, &c., 1878, p. 49) thinks it 'probable' that Titania's lines refer to 'the chief dearth in Shakespeare's time in 1594-5.'

FLEAY (*Life and Work*, &c., 1886, p. 182) finds confirmation of the date 1595 in the recorded inversion of the seasons spoken of by Titania.

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3. 'AND HANG A PEARL IN EVERY COWSLIP'S EAR.'—II, i, 14.

In the *Variorum of 1785*, STEEVENS remarked on the above line that 'the same 'thought occurs in an old comedy called *The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll*, 1600, 'i. e. the same year in which the first printed copies of this play made their appear-

ance. An enchanter says: "Twas I that lead you through the painted meadows, ' "When the light Fairies daunst upon the flowers, Hanging on every leafe an orient ' "pearle." ' [p. 135, ed. Bullen]. The author of this tiresome and mediocre comedy is unknown, and seeing that it and the present play are of the same date in publication, and that we know the latter was in existence in Meres's time, 1598, STEEVENS wisely refrained from expressing any opinion as to priority. DYCE, in 1829, discovered that a song in *Dr. Dodypoll*, 'What thing is love?' was written by Peele in *The Hunting of Cupid* (Peele's *Works*, ii, pp. 255, 260), and FLEAY (*Eng. Drama*, ii, 155) sees 'no reason for depriving him of the rest of the play,' and Fleay accordingly gives it to him. 'It was,' says FLEAY, 'most likely one of [the old plays acted by 'the children of Paul's] produced c. 1590.' Great as must be the admiration of all for Fleay's industry and almost unrivalled grasp of early dramatic history, yet not even from Fleay can we without protest accept the phrase 'most likely,' which is always, like the wrath of Achilles, the source of unnumbered woes. The present is no exception. If Fleay thought that in *Doctor Dodypoll* a line was imitated from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 'and spoiled in the imitation,' as he asserted in 1886 (*Life and Work*, p. 186), and that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was 'most cer-'tainly of this date [1595]' (*Ib.* p. 181), he would never have said in 1891 that *Doctor Dodypoll* was 'most likely' produced 'c. 1590,' five years earlier than *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

MALONE (ed. 1790, i, 286) observes that 'Doctor Dodipowle is mentioned by 'Nashe in his preface to Gabriel Harvey's *Hunt is Up*, printed in 1596.' Nine years later CHALMERS (*Sup. Apol.* 363) roundly asserts that *Doctor Dodypoll* 'was pub-'lished in 1596, or before this year,' but no copy, I believe, thus dated is now known. Chalmers is, therefore, led by his premises, 'to infer that Shakespeare, according to 'the laudable practice of the bee, which steals luscious sweets from rankest weeds, 'derived his extract from Dodipol, and not Dodipol from Shakespeare.'

Malone's suggestion and Chalmers's assertion seem to have beguiled HALLIWELL into the belief that *Dr Dodypoll* was 'known to have been written as early as 1596' —(*Introd.* p. 10), and although he does not repeat this in his Folio Edition, but gives merely Malone's reference, in his latest *Memoranda* (1879, p. 7), we find: 'As Dr 'Dodipowle is mentioned by Nash as early as 1596, this argument would prove 'Shakespeare's comedy to have been then in existence.'

It is, however, W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. iii) who has exorcised Nash's *Dr Dodypoll* once and for ever as a factor in approximating to the date of the present play, thus: 'Nashe only mentions the name "doctor Dodypowle," without referring 'to the play, and Dodipoll was a synonym for a blockhead as early as Latimer's time.

Again, H. CHICHESTER HART (*Athenæum*, 6 Oct. 1888) points out that 'the iden-'tical name occurs in *Hickscorner* (1552): "What, Master Doctor Dotypoll? Can-' "not you preach well in a black boll, Or dispute any divinity?" '—Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, i, 179.

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4. 'ONE SEES MORE DEVILS THAN VAST HELL CAN HOLD.'—V, i, 11.

In these words of Theseus, CHALMERS (*Sup. Apol.* p. 361), reading between the lines, sees something else besides 'devils': 'plainly a sarcasm on Lodge's 'pamphlet, called *Wits Miserie and the Worlds Madnesse; discovering the* Incar-'nate Devils *of this age*, which was published in 1596. Theseus had already 'remarked, in the same speech: "The lunatic, the Louer, and the Poet, Are of

'"imagination all compact." Lodge has the same word, *compact*, as singularly 'coupled: "Heinouſous thoughts *compact* them together."' This quotation from Lodge is certainly remarkable, not because Shakespeare purloined from it the common-place word 'compact,' but because he overlooked that vigorous and startling word 'Heinousous,' with its untold depths of devilish meaning. Chalmers gives no clew to the page or chapter in *Wits Miserie* where this phrase is to be found, so that many hours had to be mis-spent before I found it. It occurs in *The discouery of Asmodeus*, &c. (p. 46, ed. Hunterian Club), and let the wits' misery be imagined when the shuddering 'heinousous' stands forth as plain *heinousest;* and 'compact,' which was the very fulcrum of Chalmers's argument, turns out to be *compacted.* Lodge's phrase is: 'Hee aſſembled his hainouſeſt thoughts, & compacted them 'togither [*sic*].' Apart from the childishness of founding an argument on the use of one and the same word by two voluminous writers, Chalmers's quotation is apparently an example of that class, not so common now as aforetime, where a slight perversion may be ventured, in the hope that it will escape detection through lack of verification. A quotation from an author generally, without citing page or line, is suspicious.

But Chalmers is bound to prove that Theseus's line is sarcastic, and that in it Shakespeare is 'serving out' Lodge for some personal affront. This affront Chalmers detects in the omission of Shakespeare's name in the four or five 'divine wits' enumerated by Lodge: Lilly, Daniel, Spenser, Drayton, and Nash (p. 57, *ib.*). 'Owing 'to this preference given to other poets,' says Chalmers, p. 362, 'Shakespeare . . . now 'returned marked disdain for contemptuous silence.' 'There is another passage,' continues CHALMERS, still on the scent, as he believes, 'which Shakespeare may have 'felt: "They ſay likewiſe there is a Plaier Deuil, a handſome ſonne of Mammons, '"but yet I haue not ſeen him, becauſe he skulks in the countrie,"' &c., &c. It is not worth while to cite the rest of this long quotation (p. 40, ed. Hunterian Club), wherein the bitterest sting to Shakespeare's feelings, as is clear from Chalmers's italics, is that *he skulks in the country.*

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5. A POEM OF 'PYRAMUS AND THISBE.'

'There was,' according to CHALMERS (*Sup. Apol.* p. 363), 'a poem, entitled '*Pyramus and Thisbe*, published by Dr. Gale in 1597; but Mr. Malone believed 'this to be *posterior* to *The Midsummer's* [*sic*] *Night's Dream.* On the contrary, I 'believe, that Gale's *Pyramus and Thisbe* was prior to Shakespeare's most lament-'able "Comedy of Pyramus and Thisby."' This argument was thus effectiveiy silenced by W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. viii): 'As no one has seen this edition of 'Gale's poem, and as the story of Pyramus and Thisbe was accessible to Shakespeare 'from other sources long before 1597, we may dismiss this piece of evidence brought 'forward by Chalmers as having no decisive weight.' See further reference to Gale in *Source of the Plot.*

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6. THE DATE OF SPENSER'S 'FAERIE QUEENE.'

Again, CHALMERS, a commentator very fertile in resources (such as they are), says (*Ib.* p. 364): 'It is to be remembered, that the second volume of the *Faerie* '*Queene* was published in 1596; being entered in the Stationers' *Registers* on the '20th of January, 1595–6. This for some time furnished town talk; which never 'fails to supply our poets with dramatical topicks. The *Faerie Queene* helped Shakespeare to many hints. In the *Midsummer's Night's Dream* the Second Act opens

'with a fairy scene: The *fairy* is forward to tell, "How I serve the *fairy queen, To*
'"*dew her orbs upon the green:* And jealous Oberon would have the child *Knight*
'"of his train, to trace the forests wild." Here, then, are obvious allusions to the
'*Faerie Queene* of 1596,' subsequent to which, be it remembered, Chalmers maintains that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written.

Again, Chalmers may be safely left to W. A. WRIGHT, who replies (p. ix) to the assertion that the second volume of *The Faerie Queene* was published in 1596: 'To 'this I would add, what Chalmers himself should have stated, that although the 'second volume of Spenser's poem was not published till 1596, the first appeared in '1590, and if Shakespeare borrowed any ideas from it at all, he had an opportunity 'of doing so long before 1596. This, therefore, may be consigned to the limbo of 'worthless evidence.'

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7. THE ANCIENT PRIVILEGE OF ATHENS, WHEREBY EGEUS CLAIMS TO DISPOSE OF HIS DAUGHTER EITHER IN MARRIAGE OR TO PUT HER TO DEATH. I, i, 49.

CHALMERS (*Ecce, iterum Crispinus!*) urges yet other evidence to prove the late date of the present play. 'In the first Act,' he says (p. 365), 'Egeus comes in '*full of vexation*, with complaint against his daughter, Hermia, who had been be-'witched by Lysander with *rhymes*, and *love tokens*, and other *messengers* of *strong* '*prevailment in unharden'd youth;* and claimed of the Duke the ancient privilege 'of Athens; insisting either to dispose of her to Demetrius, or to death, "according '"to our Law, Immediately provided in that case." . . . Our observant dramatist, 'probably, alluded to the proceedings of Parliament on this subject during the session 'of 1597. On the 7th of November of that year the bill was committed, for depriv-'ing offenders of clergy, who, against the statute of Henry VII, should be found 'guilty of the taking away of women against their wills. On the 14th of November, '1597, there was a report to the House touching the abuses from *licenses for mar-'riages, without bans;* and also touching *the stealing away of men's children with-'out the assent of their parents.* . . . These obvious allusions to striking transactions, 'of an interesting nature, carry the epoch of this play beyond that session of Par-'liament, which ended on the 9th of February, 1597–8.'

Again, W. A. WRIGHT comes to the rescue (p. ix): 'This is certainly the weak-'est of all the proofs by which Chalmers endeavours to make out his case, for the 'law which Egeus wished to enforce was against a refractory daughter, who at the 'time at which he was speaking had not been stolen away by Lysander, and was 'only too willing to go with him.' The Parliamentary laws were directed against the theft of heiresses, and against illegal marriages. The law Egeus invokes was directed against disobedient daughters, whether willing victims or not.

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8. 'THE THRICE THREE MUSES, MOURNING FOR THE DEATH OF LEARNING, LATE DECEAST IN BEGGERIE.'—V, i, 59.

In a note on '*The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death Of learning,* '*late deceaſt in beggerie.*'—V, i, 59, WARBURTON observed that the reference seemed to be intended as a compliment to Spenser, who wrote a poem called *The* '*Teares of the Muses.*' Twenty-five years later, in the Var. of 1773, WARTON makes the same observation, and suggests that if the allusion be granted the date of the present play might be moved somewhat nearer to 1591, the date of Spenser's poem.

In 1778 STEEVENS remarked that this 'pretended title of a dramatic performance 'might be designed as a covert stroke of satire on those who had permitted Spenser 'to die through absolute want of bread in Dublin in the year 1598—*late* deceas'd in 'beggary seems to refer to this circumstance.' In his chronology of the play, however, in this same year, MALONE says that this allusion need not necessarily be inconsistent with the early appearance of this comedy, for it might have been inserted between the time of Spenser's death and the year 1600, when the play was published. 'Spenser, we are told by Sir James Ware, . . . did not die till 1599; '"others" (be '"adds), have it *wrongly*, 1598."'

Thus, this allusion to Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*, and to his death, was accepted as evidence until KNIGHT, who found it 'difficult to understand how an elegy on the 'great poet could have been called "some satire keen and critical,"' started a new explanation. 'Spenser's poem,' says KNIGHT (*Introductory Notice*, p. 333), 'is cer-'tainly a satire in one sense of the word; for it makes the Muses lament that all the 'glorious productions of men that proceeded from their influence had vanished from 'the earth. . . . Clio complains that mighty peers "only boast of arms and ancestry"; 'Melpomene, that "all man's life me seems a tragedy"; Thalia is "made the servant '"of the many"; Euterpe weeps that "now no pastoral is to be heard"; and so on. 'These laments do not seem identical with the "—mourning for the *death* Of *learn-*'"*ing*, late deceas'd in *beggary*." These expressions are too precise and limited to 'refer to the tears of the Muses for the decay of knowledge and art. We cannot 'divest ourselves of the belief that some real person, some real death, was alluded to. 'May we hazard a conjecture?—Greene, a man of learning, and one whom Shak-'spere, in the generosity of his nature, might wish to point at kindly, died in 1592, 'in a condition that might truly be called beggary. But how was his death, any more 'than that of Spenser, to be the occasion of "some satire keen and critical"? Every 'student of our literary history will remember the famous controversy of Nash and 'Gabriel Harvey, which was begun by Harvey's publication in 1592 of "Four Let-'"ters and certain Sonnets, especially touching Robert Greene, and other parties by '"him abused." Robert Greene was dead; but Harvey came forward, in revenge of 'an incautious attack of the unhappy poet, to satirize him in his grave,—to hold up 'his vices and his misfortunes to the public scorn,—to be "keen and critical" upon '"learning, late deceas'd in beggary."'

This conjecture of KNIGHT 'bears great appearance of probability,' says HALLIWELL (*Introd. Fol. Ed.* 1856, p. 5). 'The miserable death of Greene in 1592,' he continues, 'was a subject of general conversation for several years [it is to be regretted 'that no authority for this 'conversation' is given.—ED.], and a reference to the circumstance, though indistinctly expressed, would have been well understood in liter-'ary circles at the time it is supposed the comedy was produced. "Truely I have '"been ashamed," observed Harvey, speaking of the last days of Greene, "to heare '"some ascertayned reportes of hys most woefull and rascall estate: how the wretched '"fellow, or shall I say the Prince of beggars, laid all to gage for some few shillinges: '"and was attended by lice; and would pittifully beg a penny pott of Malmesie: '"and could not gett any of his old acquaintance to comfort, or visite him in his '"extremity but Mistris Appleby, and the mother of Infortunatus."—*Foure Letters* '*and certaine Sonnets*, 1592 [vol. i, p. 170, ed. Grosart]. And again, in the same 'work, "his hostisse *Isam* with teares in her eies, & sighes from a deeper fountaine '"(for she loved him derely), tould me of his lamentable begging of a penny pott '"of Malmesy . . . and how he was faine poore soule, to borrow her husbandes shirte,

'"whiles his owne was a washing: and how his dublet, and hose, and sword were '"sold for three shillinges."—[*Ib.* p. 171]. This testimony, although emanating 'from an ill-wisher, is not controverted by the statements of Nash, who had not the 'same opportunity of obtaining correct information; and, on the whole, it cannot be 'doubted that Greene "deceas'd in beggary." His "learning" was equally notorious. '"For judgement Jove, for learning deepe he still Apollo seemde."—*Greenes Funeralls*, 1594. There is nothing in the consideration that the poet had been attacked 'by Greene as the "upstart crow" to render Mr Knight's theory improbable. The 'allusion in the comedy, if applicable to Greene, was certainly not conceived in an 'unkind spirit; and the death of one who at most was probably rather jealous than 'bitterly inimical, under such afflicting circumstances, there can be no doubt would 'have obliterated all trace of animosity from a mind so generous as was that of Shake-'speare.' The possibility that the allusion is to Spenser is precluded, so thinks Halliwell, by the date of Spenser's death, which took place early in 1599, 'unless the 'forced explanation, that the lines were inserted after the first publication, be adopted.' This explanation is not merely 'forced.' It is impossible. 'There is greater probabil-'ity,' continues Halliwell, 'in the supposition that there is a reference to Spenser's 'poem, *The Teares of the Muses*, which appeared in 1591, . . . but the words of 'Shakespeare certainly appear to be more positive.'

In discussing this possible allusion to *The Teares of the Muses*, COLLIER, with more fanciful ingenuity than grave probability, detects 'a slight coincidence of expres-'sion between Spenser and Shakespeare in the poem of the one, and in the drama of 'the other, which deserves remark: Spenser says "Our pleasant Willy, ah, is *dead* '"*of late*." And one of Shakespeare's lines is, "Of learning, *late deceas'd* in beg-'"gary." Yet it is quite clear, from a subsequent stanza in *The Teares of the Muses*, 'that Spenser did not refer to the natural death of "Willy," whoever he were, but 'merely that he "rather chose to sit in idle cell," than write in such unfavourable 'times. In the same manner Shakespeare might not mean that Spenser (if the allu-'sion be, indeed, to him) was actually "deceas'd," but merely, as Spenser expresses 'it in his *Colin Clout*, that he was "dead in dole."' But by the time that COLLIER had come to edit Spenser (1862) he had become fully persuaded [*Works*, i, xi] that the lines in question referred 'to the death of Spenser in grief and poverty. . . . On 'the revival of plays, it was very common to make insertions of new matter especially 'adapted to the time; and this, we apprehend, was one of the additions made by 'Shakespeare shortly before his drama was published in 1600.'

R. G. WHITE, in his first edition, regards the allusion to Greene with favour, mainly because it reveals 'the gentle and generous nature of Sweet Will' in forgiving and forgetting a petty wrong when the perpetrator was in the grave, and 'had been a 'fellow-labourer in the field of letters, and an unhappy one.'

STAUNTON attaches but little importance to the explanations of Titania's allusions to the weather, and attaches still less to the present allusions to Spenser, albeit he acknowledges that an allusion to Greene is more plausible.

DYCE regards them, one and all, as 'ridiculous.'

WARD (*Eng. Dram. Lit.* 1875, i, 380) having quoted Dyce's all-embracing 'ridiculous,' and mentioned Spenser's *Teares* and his death, goes on to say that 'the term "ridiculous" is not too strong to characterise a third supposition that [the lines "The thrice three Muses," &c.] contain a reference to the death of Robert Greene (1592), upon whose memory Shakespeare would certainly in that case have been resolved to heap coals of fire.'

STOKES, however, is temerarious enough to say (*Chrono. Order*, p. 50) that he ventures to incur the ridicule [pronounced by Ward], for how can a '*satire, keen and critical*, be used to "heap coals of fire"? and we know that Greene was 'regarded by Gabriel Harvey and others (including Shakespeare himself) [it is to 'be regretted that the authority for this assertion has been omitted.—ED.] with 'anything but a forgiving spirit. Surely the reference to the death "Of *learning*, late *deceased in beggary*," must allude to Robert Greene, "utriusque Academiæ in "Artibus Magister" (as he styles himself on some of his title-pages), parson (miser-'abile dictu), doctor, author, who died in misery and want in a London attic.'

FLEAY (*Manual*, 1876, p. 26) says that there may be an allusion to Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*, published in 1591, or 'possibly to the death of Greene in 1592, 'or to both.'

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. viii): 'It is difficult to see any parallel between 'Gabriel Harvey's satire and "The thrice three Muses mourning for the death of '"Of learning," which must of necessity satirize some person or persons other than 'him whose death is mourned, even supposing that any particular person is referred 'to. On the whole, I am inclined to think that Spenser's poem may have suggested 'to Shakespeare a title for the piece submitted to Theseus, and that we need not 'press for any closer parallel between them.'

To GROSART, Spenser's latest editor, it seems 'pretty clear the *Teares of the 'Muses* ("thrice three") was intended to be designated. For only in the *Teares of 'the Muses* is there that combination of "mourning" with satire that leads to [The-'seus's] commentary on the proposal to have such a "device" for entertainment of 'the joyous marriage-company. . . . One wishes the suggested "device . . . had 'approved itself to Theseus as it had to Philostrate. For then, instead of the fooling 'of Pyramus and Thisbe . . . we might have had William Shakespeare's estimate of 'Edmund Spenser. A thousand times must [Theseus's] preference be grudged and 'lamented.'—*Spenser, Works*, i, 92.

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9. AND, FINALLY, THAT THE PLAY WAS INTENDED FOR THE CELEBRATION OF A NOBLE MARRIAGE.

With our knowledge of the purposes for which Masques and Dramatic Entertainments were written, it is not improbable, from the final scene of the play, that this *Dream* was composed for the festivities of some marriage in high life, at which possibly the Queen herself was present. If a noble marriage before 1598 can be found to which there are unmistakeable allusions in the play, we shall go far to confining the *Date of Composition* within narrow limits.

In the notes following Schlegel's *Translation*, in 1830, TIECK has the following (p. 353): 'Whoever understands the poet and his style must feel assured that we owe 'this work of fantasie and imagination to that same poetic intoxication which gave us '*The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, As You Like It*, and *Henry V.* It was 'printed first in 1600, and we can assume that it had been already written before this 'year, for Mares [*sic*] mentions it in 1598. In this same year, 1598, the friend of 'the poet, the Earl of Southampton, espoused his beloved Mistress Varnon, to whom 'he had been long betrothed. Perhaps the germ, or the first sketch, of the drama 'was a felicitation to the newly-married pair, in the shape of a so-called Mask, in 'which Oberon, Titania, and their fairies wished and prophesied health and happi-'ness to the bridal couple. The comic antistrophe, the scene with the "rude mechan-

'"icals," formed what was termed the anti-mask. . . . Thus to this Occasional Poem 'there were added subsequently the other scenes of the comedy. Moreover, South-'ampton married against the wishes of the Queen, who appeared not to have known 'of it at first, because she treated it as though it had been secret. The young Lady 'Varnon, when her lover left her to go to France, where he was presented to Henry 'IV, was an object of sympathy to all her friends. Through this alliance Essex 'became connected with Southampton, with whom he had not been before on good 'terms. For Southampton, as we learn from Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, many a fair one 'sighed, attracted by his charms. Wherever we turn we meet references and allu-'sions which, if they do not more clearly explain this wondrous poem, at least, by 'their half-glimmering explanations, tantalise the readers almost as much as Puck, in 'the play, teases the human mortals.'

ULRICI (*Shakespeare's Dram. Kunst*, 1847, p. 539; trans. by L. Dora Schmitz, 1876, ii, 81) is inclined from 'internal evidence to assume that 1596–97 was the year 'in which this piece was composed. . . . [Tieck's conjecture that it was composed for 'Southampton's marriage] I consider untenable; at all events it is not easy to see 'how the title of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* . . . could be appropriate for the '"masque" of Oberon and Titania with its "anti-masque," the play of the mechan-'ics, in short, for a mere epithalamium. But, in fact, it would, in any case, be a 'strange and almost impertinent proceeding to present a noble patron with a wedding 'gift in the form of a poem where love—from its serious and ethical side—is made a 'subject for laughter and represented only from a comic aspect, in its faithlessness 'and levity, as a mere play of the imagination, and where even the marriage feast of 'Theseus appears in a comical light, owing to the manner in which it is celebrated. 'And it would have been even a greater want of tact to produce a piece, composed 'for such an occasion, on the public stage, either before or after the earl's marriage.'

GERALD MASSEY, according to whose view Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and portions of many of his plays, are saturated with allusions to Southampton, Essex, Lady Penelope Rich, Elizabeth Vernon, and others of that circle, discusses Oberon's command to Puck to bring that 'little Western flower,' which, with Halpin, he believes to be Lettice Knollys, and comes to the conclusion that 'Dian's bud' is the emblem of Elizabeth Vernon, and, following Tieck, he has 'no doubt' (*Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 1866 and 1872, p. 481, ed. 1888, p. 443) 'that this [present] dainty drama was writ 'ten with the view of celebrating the marriage of Southampton and Elizabeth Ver-'non; for them his Muse put on the wedding raiment of such richness; theirs was 'the bickering of jealousy so magically mirrored, the nuptial path so bestrewn with 'the choicest of our poet's flowers, the wedding bond that he so fervently blessed in 'fairy guise. He is, as it were, the familiar friend at the marriage-feast, who gossips 'cheerily to the company of a perplexing passage in the lover's courtship, which they 'can afford to smile at now! [but that the marriage was disallowed by the Queen.—'ed. 1888]. The play was probably composed some time before the marriage took 'place [in 1598], at a period when it may have been thought the Queen's consent 'could be obtained, but not so early as the commentators have imagined. I have 'ventured the date of 1595.' In a footnote there is added: 'Perhaps it was one of 'the plays presented before Mr Secretary Cecil and Lord Southampton when they 'were leaving Paris, in January, 1598, at which time, as Rowland White relates, the 'Earl's marriage was secretly talked of.'

ELZE (*Jahrbuch d. deutschen Sh.-Gesellschaft*, 1869, p. 150; *Essays* trans. by L. Dora Schmitz, 1874, p. 30) finds objections to Tieck's conjecture, in the date of

Meres's allusion in 1598, the very year of Southampton's marriage, and in the clandestine character of that marriage, and finds allusions in the play which enforce a much earlier date. 'To state it briefly,' he says (p. 40), 'all indications point to the 'fact that [this play] was written for and performed at the marriage of the Earl of 'Essex in the year 1590.' Essex's marriage, though secret, was not clandestine, and ELZE assumes that this secrecy did not extend so far but that there could be song and music and private theatricals, and that the main thing was to keep it from the ears of the Queen until it was too late for her to refuse to sanction it; so far and no further was it secret. In Essex and his bride, the widow of Sir Philip Sidney, ELZE finds a parallel to Theseus and Hippolyta. 'Like Theseus, the bridegroom, in spite of his 'youth, was a captain and, doubtless, a huntsman as well; whether, certainly in a 'different sense from Theseus, he had won his bride by his sword could be intelligible 'only to the initiated. As a youth of seventeen he had followed his step-father, Lei-'cester, into the Netherlands, . . . and at Zutphen, in 1586, he so distinguished him-'self that Leicester knighted him.' Great clerks purposed to greet Theseus with premeditated welcomes, and when Essex returned in 1589 from his Spanish campaign, Peele dedicated to him his *Eclogue Gratulatory*. 'Like Theseus, he courted 'many an Aeglé and Perigenia, and then left them.' From the fact that Lady Sidney accompanied her husband to Holland and nursed him when he was mortally wounded at Zutphen, and carried him to Arnheim, ELZE thinks 'we shall scarcely be mistaken 'in conceiving her a strong heroic woman like Hippolyta—in a good sense—who in 'merry days delighted in the chase and in the barking of the hounds, like the Ama-'zon queen.' ELZE (p. 47) conceives the question, merely as a possibility, 'whether 'two of Essex's servants or officers did not enter upon their marriage at the same time 'as their master, so that the triple wedding in the play would have exactly corre-'sponded to what actually took place.' Of Puck's concluding speech, 'If we shad-'ows have offended,' &c., ELZE says that 'these lines would be flat and meaningless 'if they had not been spoken at Essex's wedding. The pardon asked for would cer-'tainly have been granted, the more readily as it could scarcely have escaped those 'interested in the play that the object of the passage in question was to put in a good 'word for them with the queen.' ELZE (p. 60) concludes: 'Thus, from whatever 'side we may view *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and whatever points we may take 'into consideration, everything agrees with the supposition that it was written in the 'spring of the year 1590, for the wedding of the Earl of Essex with Lady Sidney.'

KURZ (*Jahrbuch d. deut. Sh.-Gesellschaft*, 1869, p. 268) upholds Elze in the supposition that Essex's wedding was the festive occasion of the composition of this play, and suggests, as a proof, that it must have been acted before 1591; that the first three Books of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, with its idealised Queen Elizabeth, appeared in that year, and 'after that could Shakespeare let his fairy queen, albeit called Titania 'and the spouse of Oberon, fall in love with an ass? A question not to be lightly 'tossed aside. Not within half a decade at least, one would think, could he venture 'on such an incident, until the burning suspicion of an intentional allusion had cooled 'down.' KURZ has been taken seriously here. It is doubtful. There is a vein of quiet humour running through his *Essay* that makes it difficult to say whether or not he is anywhere really in earnest. From a thorough study of the *Sidney Papers* he comes to the conclusion that a certain entertainment, there mentioned, was given on the occasion of Essex's marriage, which must have taken place some time in April, 1590, either before the sixth, on which day the bride's father died, or sooner or later after it. In the latter case, her unprotected state might have accelerated the wed-

ding and justified the haste. 'There is no doubt,' says KURZ, p. 286, 'that the 'marriage itself was conducted quite privately. But the public after-celebration 'demanded a certain caution, which forsooth could not be lost sight of for months to 'come. Any unexpected festivity would arouse the curiosity and suspicion of the 'Queen, already curious and suspicious; it would be far better then to select for the '*public* celebration some day which was a *public* festival. And such a one there was 'right off—namely, May Day, from time immemorial one of the freest festivals of the 'whole year, in city or country, by young or old, rich or poor—all was merriment. 'On this day, then, or close enough to it, a banquet [mentioned in the Sidney Let-'ters] could take place, without exciting any comment, and afterwards a play.' This explains the allusions to May. In short, KURZ reaches the positive conclusion (p. 289) that the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was performed, for the first time, at a banquet on the occasion of the unheralded festivities accompanying the marriage of Essex, and in conjunction with the observances of May in 1590, as a masque with significant characters, or as a masque-like comedy with a masque especially introduced, and all of it designed to conceal the object for which the festivities were given. Hence is explained the apparent incongruity, whereby the piece seems to have been written so emphatically for a marriage, and yet, on the other hand, does not in some of its details seem quite appropriate thereto. Among these latter is manifestly the allusion to Theseus's former loves; this KURZ explains (p. 291) by supposing that, on account of the mourning for her father, the bride was not present at the performance of the play.

The discrepancy between Hippolyta's 'new moon' and the full moon of Pyramus and Thisbe, KURZ explains by his theory that the play was not performed at the wedding itself, but was a part of the festivities of the following May day. 'If the 'Kalendar of 1590 gives a full moon on the first of May, then all calculations are 'upset. But be of good cheer: the old Ephemerides (*Cypr. Leovitius*, 1556–1606, 'Augsburg, 1557; *Mart. Everart*, 1590–1610, Leyden, 1597) agree in naming the '30 April as the day whereon that May moon renewed itself.' If KURZ has rightly understood and quoted 'the old Ephemerides,' these latter certainly corroborate, quite remarkably, Hippolyta's words as generally adopted since Rowe's edition; but I fail to see how they help KURZ, who says distinctly (p. 286) that Essex's marriage (i. e. Theseus's) took place before or shortly after the sixth of April, and that it was merely the public festivities which were held on the following May day, when the 'silver bow' must, of course, be full or gibbous if it was 'newbent' about a fortnight or three weeks before. I am afraid no Ephemerides will reconcile Hippolyta, Quince, and Kurz. Moreover, there is a conflict of authority. W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. xi, footnote) took the pains to apply to Professor ADAMS, through whose kindness he was enabled to state that 'the nearest new moon to May 1, 1590, was on April 23, 'and that there was a new moon on May 1 in 1592.' KURZ had better have left undisturbed the dust and moonshine on the 'old Ephemerides.'

By referring *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to Essex's marriage, KURZ thinks to solve another problem hitherto insoluble, that of accounting for Shakespeare's early patronage by the nobility. In Theseus, the hero and statesman, lofty of manner, appreciative of poesie, we find (p. 299) the ideal character which the popular verdict gave to Essex; and in Hippolyta the character of Lady Frances was adequately portrayed. 'It is easy to see [p. 300] what an effect such a solution of the task must 'have had on Essex, a man who could appreciate all the beauties and delicacies 'of the play.... The performance, therefore, which so immeasurably surpassed all

demands and expectations, must have drawn, of necessity, the attention of Essex to 'the poet. . . . The Earl of three and twenty and the Poet of six and twenty . . . 'must have become intimate as soon as they had become personally acquainted, 'Shakespeare in the inexhaustible fullness and grace of his genius; Essex with his 'captivating condescension, whereby he elevated to his own level those in a lowly 'station, and with that character so full of contradictions which offered for study at 'one and the same time a Hotspur and a Hamlet. Whose recommendation it was, 'whereon the poet three years afterwards was introduced to Southampton, is now 'placed beyond all doubt.'

It is in reference to these speculations by Kurz that W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. xi) caustically remarks: 'In such questions it would be well to remember the maxim 'of the ancient rabbis, "Teach thy tongue to say, I do not know."' But is not this a little too severe on Kurz, who is merely copying the methods of English-speaking commentators in founding theory after theory on imaginary possibilities?

DOWDEN (p. 67): *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written on the occasion of the marriage of some noble couple—possibly . . . as Mr Gerald Massey supposes; possibly . . . as Prof. Elze supposes.

FLEAY, in his *Manual*, 1876, p. 26, gives the date as of 1592, but wider knowledge led him to the belief that this was the date of the stage-play only. 'In its 'present form' it is of a later date. In his *Life and Work of Shakespeare* (1886, p. 181) we find, under the year 1595, as follows: 'January 26 was the date of the mar-'riage of William Stanley, Earl of Derby, at Greenwich. Such events were usually 'celebrated with the accompaniment of plays or interludes, masques written specially 'for the occasion not having yet become fashionable. The company of players 'employed at these nuptials would certainly be the Chamberlain's [the company to 'which Shakespeare belonged], who had, so lately as the year before, been in the 'employ of the Earl's brother Ferdinand. No play known to us is so fit for the pur-'pose as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which in its present form is certainly of this 'date. About the same time Edward Russel, Earl of Bedford, married Lucy Har-'rington. Both marriages may have been enlivened by this performance. This is 'rendered more probable by the identity of the Oberon story with that of Drayton's '*Nymphidia*, whose special patroness at this time was the newly-married Countess of 'Bedford. . . . The date of the play here given is again confirmed by the description 'of the weather in II, ii. . . . Chute's *Cephalus and Procris* was entered on the *Sta-'tioners' Registers*, 28 September, 1593; Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, 22d October, '1593; Marlowe and Nash's *Dido* was printed in 1594. All these stories are 'alluded to in the play. The date of the Court performance must be in the winter 'of 1594–5. But the traces of the play having been altered from a version for the 'stage are numerous [see FLEAY's note on V, i, 417]. . . . The date of the stage-play 'may, I think, be put in the winter of 1592; and if so, it was acted, not at the Rose, 'but where Lord Strange's company were travelling. For the allusion in V, i, 59, '"The thrice three Muses," &c. to Spenser's *Tears of the Muses* (1591), or Greene's 'death, 3d September, 1592, could not, on either interpretation, be much later than 'the autumn of 1592, and the lines in III, i, 160, "I am a spirit of no common rate: '"The summer still doth tend upon my state," are so closely like those in Nash's '*Summer's Last Will* [see FLEAY's note, *ad loc.*], that I think they are alluded to by 'Shakespeare. The singularly fine summer of 1592 is attributed to the influence of 'Elizabeth, the Fairy Queen. Nash's play was performed at the Archbishop's palace 'at Croydon in Michaelmas term of the same year by a "number of hammer-handed

'"clowns (for so it pleaseth them in modesty to name themselves);" but I believe the 'company originally satirised in Shakespeare's play was the Earl of Sussex's, Bottom, 'the chief clown, being intended for Robert Greene.' See Prof. J. M. BROWNE (*Source of the Plot*), who has in this conjecture anticipated FLEAY. In his *English Drama*, published in 1891, FLEAY slightly modified his opinions. 'This play,' he there says (vol. ii, p. 194), 'has certainly alternative endings: one a song by Oberon for a mar-'riage, and then *Exeunt*, with no mark of Puck's remaining on the stage; the other, 'an Epilogue by Puck, apparently for the Court (cf. "gentles" in l. 423). It might 'seem, as the Epilogue is placed last, that the marriage version was the earlier, and 'so I took it to be when I wrote my *Life of Shakespeare*, but the compliment to 'Elizabeth in II, i, 164, was certainly written for the Court; and this passage is essen-'tial to the original conduct of the play, which may have been printed from a mar-'riage-version copy, with additions from the Court copy. This would require a date 'for the marriage subsequent to the Court performance. One version must date 1596, 'for the weather description, II, i, which can be omitted without in any way affecting 'the progress of the play, requires that date. I believe this passage was inserted for 'the Court performance in 1596, that on the public stage having taken place in 1595; 'but that the marriage presentation, being subsequent to this, was most likely at the 'union of Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon in 1598–9. In any case, this was 'Shakespeare's first Epilogue now extant.' FLEAY finds further confirmation of his date (*Life and Work*, p. 185) in the lion incident noted at III, i, 31.

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, ix): If the occasion for which this play was written 'could be determined with any degree of probability, we should be able to ascertain 'within a little the time at which it was composed. But here again we embark upon 'a wide sea of conjecture, with neither star nor compass to guide us. That the *Mid-'summer Night's Dream* may have been first acted at the marriage of some noble-'man, and that, from the various compliments which are paid to Elizabeth, the per-'formance may have taken place when the Queen herself was present, are no improb-'able suppositions. But when was this conjuncture of events? No theory which has 'yet been proposed satisfies both conditions. . . . In fact, we know nothing whatever 'about the matter, and of guesses like these [as set forth in the preceding pages] 'there is neither end nor profit.'

Here ends the discussion of the nine specified topics which are supposed to determine the *Date of Composition*. The opinions of several critics of weight, which are general in their scope, are as follows:—

MALONE (*Variorum 1821*, ii, p. 333): 'The poetry of this piece, glowing with all 'the warmth of a youthful and lively imagination, the many scenes which it contains 'of almost continual rhyme, the poverty of the fable, and want of discrimination among 'the higher personages, dispose me to believe that it was one of our author's earliest 'attempts in comedy.

'It seems to have been written while the ridiculous competitions prevalent among 'the histrionic tribe were strongly impressed by novelty on his mind. He would 'naturally copy those manners first with which he was first acquainted. The ambi-'tion of a theatrical candidate for applause he has happily ridiculed in Bottom the 'weaver. But among the more dignified persons of the drama we look in vain for any 'traits of character. The manners of Hippolyta, the Amazon, are undistinguished 'from those of other females. Theseus, the associate of Hercules, is not engaged in 'any adventure worthy of his rank or reputation, nor is he in reality an agent through-

out the play. Like Henry VIII. he goes out a Maying. He meets the lovers in perplexity, and makes no effort to promote their happiness; but when supernatural 'accidents have reconciled them, he joins their company, and concludes his day's 'entertainment by uttering miserable puns at an interlude represented by a troop of 'clowns. Over the fairy part of the drama he cannot be supposed to have any influ-'ence. This part of the fable, indeed (at least as much of it as relates to the quarrels 'of Oberon and Titania), was not of our author's invention.' [This assertion rests on Tyrwhitt's remark, that 'the true progenitors of Shakespeare's Oberon and Titania' appear to have been Pluto and Proserpine in Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale*.—ED.]. 'Through the whole piece, the more exalted characters are subservient to the interests 'of those beneath them. We laugh with Bottom and his fellows; but is a single pas-'sion agitated by the faint and childish solicitudes of Hermia and Demetrius, of Helena 'and Lysander, those shadows of each other? That a drama, of which the principal 'personages are thus insignificant, and the fable thus meagre and uninteresting, was 'one of our author's earliest compositions does not, therefore, seem a very improbable 'conjecture; nor are the beauties, with which it is embellished, inconsistent with this 'supposition; for the genius of Shakespeare, even in its minority, could embroider the 'coarsest materials with the brightest and most lasting colors.'

VERPLANCK (*Introductory Remarks*, p. 6, 1847): It seems to me very probable (though I do not know that it has appeared so to any one else) that the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was originally written in a very different form from that in which we now have it, several years before the date of the drama in its present shape—that it was subsequently remoulded, after a long interval, with the addition of the heroic personages, and all the dialogue between Oberon and Titania, perhaps with some alteration of the lower comedy; the rhyming dialogue and the whole perplexity of the Athenian lovers being retained, with slight change, from the more boyish comedy. The completeness and unity of the piece would indeed quite exclude such a conjecture, if we were forced to reason only from the evidence afforded by itself; but, as in *Romeo and Juliet* (not to speak of other dramas), we have the certain proof of the amalgamation of the products of different periods of the author's progressive intellect and power, the comparison leads to a similar conclusion here.

R. G. WHITE (ed. i, p. 16, 1857): It seems that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was produced, in part at least, at an earlier period of Shakespeare's life than his twenty-ninth year. [That is, in 1593.] Although as a whole it is the most exquisite, the daintiest, and most fanciful creation that exists in poetry, and abounds in passages worthy even of Shakespeare in his full maturity, it also contains whole Scenes which are hardly worthy of his 'prentice hand that wrought *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *The Comedy of Errors*, and which yet seem to bear the unmistakeable marks of his unmistakeable pen. These Scenes are the various interviews between Demetrius and Lysander, Hermia and Helen, in Acts II and III. It is difficult to believe that such lines as 'Do not say so, Lysander; say not so. What though he love your Hermia? *Lord what though?*' 'When at your hands did I deserve this scorn? Is 't not enough, is 't not enough, *young man*, That I did never, no, nor never can,' &c.—Act II, Sc. i,—it is difficult to believe that these, and many others of a like character which accompany them, were written by Shakespeare after he had produced even *Venus and Adonis* and the plays mentioned above, and when he could write the poetry of the other parts of this very comedy. There seems, therefore, warrant for the opinion that this Dream was one of the very first conceptions of the young poet; that, living in a rural district where tales of house-

hold fairies were rife among his neighbors, memories of these were blended in his youthful reveries with images of the classic heroes that he found in the books which we know he read so eagerly; that perhaps on some midsummer's night he, in very deed, did dream a dream and see a vision of this comedy, and went from Stratford up to London with it partly written; that, when there, he found it necessary at first to forego the completion of it for labor that would find readier acceptance at the theatre; and that afterward, when he had more freedom of choice, he reverted to his early production, and in 1594 worked it up into the form in which it was produced. It seems to me that in spite of the silence of the Quarto title-pages on the subject, this might have been done, or at least that some additions might have been made to the play, for a performance at Court. The famous allusion to Queen Elizabeth as 'a 'fair vestal throned by the west' tends to confirm me in that opinion. Shakespeare never worked for nothing, and, besides, could he, could any man, have the heart to waste so exquisite a compliment as that is, and to such a woman as Queen Elizabeth, by uttering it behind her back? Except in the play itself I have no support for this opinion, but I am willing to be alone in it.

[In a list of Shakespeare's Works in the order in which they were probably written, R. G. WHITE (vol. i, p. xlvi, 2d ed.) gives the date of the present play as of '1592 (?) and 1601 (?).' The latter is an impossible date; it implies that there are additions to be found in the Folio which are not in the Quartos. There is none.—ED.]

The COWDEN-CLARKES: The internal evidence of the composition itself gives unmistakeable token of its having been written when the poet was in his flush of youthful manhood. The classicality of the principal personages, Theseus and Hippolyta; the Grecian-named characters; the prevalence of rhyme; the grace and whimsicality of the fairy-folk; the rich warmth of coloring that pervades the poetic diction; the abundance of description, rather than of plot, action, and character-developement, all mark the young dramatist. With a manifest advance in beauty beyond those which we conceive to be his earliest-written productions—*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*—we believe the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to be one of his very first-written dramas after those three plays. We feel it to have been, with *Romeo and Juliet*, the work of his happy hours, when he wrote from inspiration and out of the fulness of his luxuriant imagination, between the intervals of his business-work—the adaptation of such immediately needed stage-plays as the three parts of *Henry VI.* Those, we think, he touched up for current production, for the use of the theatre at which he was employed and had a share in; but his overflowing poet-heart was put into productions like the Southern-storied *Romeo and Juliet*, and the fairy-favoured *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where every page is a forest glade flooded with golden light amid the green glooms.

According to Prof. INGRAM'S *Table of Light and Weak Endings* (*New Sh. Soc. Trans.* 1874, p. 450) the present play stands fourth in the list.

According to Dr FURNIVALL'S *Order and Groups of the Plays*, in his *Introduction* to the *Leopold Shakespeare*, this play belongs to the *First Period* or *Mistaken-Identity Group*, and its date is given '? 1590–1.'

Rev. H. P. STOKES (*Chronological Order of Sh.'s Plays*, 1878, p. 52): Mr Skeat, in his *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, speaking of the various editions of North's translation (viz. 1579, 1595, 1603, 1612, &c.), says: 'Shakespeare must certainly have known 'the work before 1603, because there is a clear allusion to it in *Midsummer Night's* '*Dream*.' . . . Mr Skeat continues: 'Whether this play was written earlier than 1595

'I leave to the investigation of the reader.' The present investigation seems to point to that very year, and may not the re-issue of North's work in this year, after it had been so long out of print, have directed Shakespeare's attention to what so soon became his chief store-house for material to work upon?

To recapitulate, chronologically:—

MALONE	(1790)	1592 ✓
CHALMERS	(1799)	beginning of 1598
DRAKE	(1817)	1593
MALONE	(1821)	1594
TIECK	(1830)	1598
CAMPBELL	(1838)	1594
KNIGHT	(1840)	1594
ULRICI	(1847)	1596–7
VERPLANCK	(1847)	1595–6
GERVINUS	(1849)	1594–6
W. W. LLOYD	(1856)	not before 1594
R. G. WHITE i	(1857)	Shakespeare's earliest play.
COLLIER	(1858)	end of 1594 or beginning of 1595
STAUNTON	(1864)	description of seasons is singularly applicable to 1593–4
DYCE ii	(1866)	two or three years before 1598
KEIGHTLEY	(1867)	1594 or 1595
ELZE, KURZ	(1869)	spring of 1590
FURNIVALL	(1877)	? 1590–1
ROLFE	(1877)	perhaps as early as 1594
W. A. WRIGHT	(1878)	before 1598
STOKES	(1878)	1595
HALLIWELL	(1879)	after 20 January, 1595–6
HUDSON	(1880)	before 1594.
R. G. WHITE ii	(1883)	first draft as early as 1592, if not earlier.
FLEAY	(1886)	Stage play, 1592 ✓ Court play, 1594–5
MARSHALL	(1888)	approximately, 1595
MASSEY	(1888)	1595
DEIGHTON	(1893)	1592–1594 ✓
VERITY	(1894)	at end of 1594 or beginning of 1595

SOURCE OF THE PLOT

CAPELL (*Introd.* vol. i, p. 64, 1767) suggested that it was 'not improbable that 'Shakespeare took a hint of his fairies' from Drayton's *Nymphidia;* 'a line of that 'poem, "Thorough bush, thorough briar," occurs also in this play.'

MALONE set at rest this suggestion by showing that the *Nymphidia* was printed after *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* See p. 246, above.

'The rest of the play,' continues CAPELL, 'is, doubtless, invention, the names only 'of *Theseus*, *Hippolyta*, and *Theseus'* former loves, *Antiopa* and others, being his-'torical; and taken from the translated *Plutarch* in the article *Theseus.*'

The passages in *Plutarch* which, as is alleged, supplied SHAKESPEARE with allusions, are as follows. They are taken from SKEAT'S *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, 1875:—

'[Theseus] pricked forwards with emulation and envy of [Hercules's glory] . . . 'determined with himself one day to do the like, and the rather, because they were 'near kinsmen, being cousins removed by the mother's side.'—p. 278.

Again: 'Albeit in his time other princes of Greece had done many goodly and 'notable exploits in the wars, yet Herodotus is of opinion that Theseus was never in 'any one of them, saving that he was at the battle of the Lapithæ against the Cen-'taurs. . . . Also he did help Adrastus, King of the Argives, to recover the bodies of 'those that were slain in the battle before the city of Thebes.'—p. 288.

Compare:—

'*Lis.* The battell with the Centaurs to be sung
'By an Athenian Eunuch, to the Harpe.
'*The.* Wee'l none of that. That haue I told my Loue
'In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
'*Lis.* The riot of the tipsie Bacchanals,
'Tearing the Thracian singer, in their rage?
'*The.* That is an old deuice, and it was plaid
'When I from *Thebes* came last a Conqueror.'

We read in Plutarch: 'This Sinnis had a goodly fair daughter called Perigouna, 'which fled away when she saw her father slain; whom [Theseus] followed and 'sought all about. But she had hidden herself in a grove full of certain kinds of 'wild pricking rushes called *stœbe*, and wild sperage which she simply like a child 'intreated to hide her, as if they had heard. . . . But Theseus finding her, called her, 'and sware by his faith he would use her gently, and do her no hurt, nor displeasure 'at all. Upon which promise she came out of the bush.'—p. 279.

Again: 'After he was arrived in Creta, he slew there the Minotaur . . . by the 'means and help of Ariadne: who being fallen in fancy with him, did give him a 'clue of thread. . . . And he returned back the same way he went, bringing with him 'those other young children of Athens, whom with Ariadne also he carried afterwards 'away. . . . And being a solemn custom of Creta, that the women should be present 'to see those open sports and sights, Ariadne, being at these games among the rest, 'fell further in love with Theseus seeing him so goodly a person, so strong, and invin-'cible in wrestling.'—p. 283. 'Some say, that Ariadne hung herself for sorrow, when 'she saw that Theseus had cast her off. Other write, that she was transported by 'mariners into the ile of Naxos, where she was married unto Œnarus the priest of 'Bacchus: and they think that Theseus left her, because he was in love with another 'as by these verses should appear:—

'Ægles, the nymph, was loved of Theseus,
'Who was the daughter of Panopeus.'—p. 284.

Again: 'Touching the voyage he made by the sea Major, Philochorus, and some 'other hold opinion, that he went thither with Hercules against the Amazons: and 'that to honour his valiantness, Hercules gave him Antiopa, the Amazon. But the 'more part of the other historiographers . . . do write, that Theseus went thither alone, '. . . and that he took this Amazon prisoner, which is likeliest to be true. . . . Bion '. . . saith, that he brought her away by deceit and stealth . . . and that Theseus 'enticed her to come into his ship, who brought him a present; and so soon as she 'was aboard, he hoised his sail, and so carried her away.'—p. 286.

Again: 'Afterwards, at the end of four months, peace was taken between [the 'Athenians and the Amazons] by means of one of the women called Hippolyta. 'For this historiographer calleth the Amazon which Theseus married, Hippolyta, and 'not Antiopa. Nevertheless some say she was slain (fighting on Theseus' side) with 'a dart, by another called Molpadia. In memory whereof, the pillar which is 'joined to the temple of the Olympian ground was set up in her honour. We 'are not to marvel, if the history of things so ancient be found so diversely written.' —p. 288.

From these weeds Shakespeare gathered this honey:—

'*Qu.* Why art thou here
'Come from the farthest steepe of *India?*
'But that forsooth the bouncing *Amazon*
'Your buskin'd Mistress, and your Warrior loue,
'To *Theseus* must be wedded; and you come
'To giue their bed ioy and prosperitie.
'*Ob.* How canst thou thus for shame *Tytania*,
'Glance at my credite, with *Hippolita?*
'Knowing I know thy loue to *Theseus?*
'Didst thou not leade him through the glimmering night
'From *Peregenia*, whom he rauished?
'And make him with faire Eagles breake his faith
'With *Ariadne*, and *Antiopa?*'

CHAUCER'S KNIGHT'S TALE

In the *First Variorum*, 1773, STEEVENS remarked that it is 'probable that the 'hint for this play was received from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale;* thence it is that our 'author speaks of Theseus as duke of Athens.'

This suggestion was repeated in all the Variorums down to that of 1821; and was adopted by KNIGHT, in what may be fairly considered as the first critical edition after that date. SINGER'S edition of 1826 is little else than an abridgement, without acknowledgement, of the Variorum of 1821; and HARNESS'S contribution to his edition of 1830 is mainly confined to *The Life of Shakespeare.* KNIGHT even goes so far as to point out the very passages 'in which, as he says, p. 343, 'it is not difficult to trace Shakespeare.' These passages are as follows (ed. Morris):—

'Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
'Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;

'Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
'And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
'That gretter was ther non under the sonne.
'Ful many a riche contré hadde he wonne;
'That with his wisdam and his chivalrie
'He conquered al the regne of Femynye,
'That whilom was i-cleped Cithea;
'And weddede the queen Ipolita,
'And brought hire hoom with him in his contré,
'With moche glorie and gret solempnité,
'And eek hire yonge suster Emelye.
'And thus with victorie and with melodye
'Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
'And al his ost, in armes him biside.
'And certes, if it nere to long to heere,
'I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
'How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
'By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
'And of the grete bataille for the nones
'Bytwix Athenes and the Amazones;
'And how asegid was Ypolita,
'The faire hardy quyen of Cithea;
'And of the feste that was at hire weddynge,
'And of the tempest at hire hoom comynge;
'But al that thing I most as now forbere.
'I have, God wot, a large feeld to ere.'

In a note on I, i, 177, KNIGHT says, 'The very expression "to do observance" in 'connection with the rites of May, occurs twice in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*:—

'This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
'Til it fel oones in a morwe of May
'That Emelie, that fairer was to seene
'Than is the lilie on hire stalkes grene.
'And fresscher than the May with floures newe—
'For with the rose colour strof hire hewe,
'I not which was the fairer of hem two—
'Er it was day, as sche was wont to do,
'Sche was arisen, and al redy dight;
'For May wole have no sloggardye a nyght.
'The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
'And maketh hin out of his sleepe sterte,
'And seith, "Arys, and *do thin observance*."'

[Page 33. The italics are Knight's.] Again:—

'And Arcite, that is in the court ryal
'With Theseus, his squyer principal,
'Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.
'And for *to doon his observance to May*.'—[p. 47].

Furthermore in a note on III, ii, 412:—'Even till the Easterne gate all fierie red, 'Opening on *Neptune*, with faire blessed beames, Turnes into yellow gold, his salt

'greene streames.' KNIGHT says: 'This splendid passage was, perhaps, suggested 'by some line in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*:

'The busy larke, messager of day,
'Salueth in hire song the morwe gray;
'And fyry Phebus ryseth up so bright,
'That al the orient laugheth of the light,
'And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
'The silver dropes, hongyng on the leeves.'—[p. 46].

On 'Goe one of you finde out the Forrester,' &c., IV, i, 117, KNIGHT observes: 'The Theseus of Chaucer was a mighty hunter:—

'This mene I now by mighty Theseus
'That for to honte is so desirous,
'And namely the grete hart in May,
'That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
'That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
'With hont and horn, and houndes him byside.
'For in his hontyng hath he such delyt,
'That it is al his joye and appetyt
'To been himself the grete hertes bane,
'For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.'—[p. 52].

HALLIWELL (*Introd.* p. 11, 1841) thinks that commentators have overlooked the following passage, 'which occurs nearly at the end of *The Knight's Tale*, and may 'have furnished Shakespeare with the idea of introducing an interlude at the end of 'his play:—

'"—ne how the Grekes pleye
'"The wake-pleyes, kepe I nat to seye;
'"Who wrastleth best naked, with oyle enoynt,
'"Ne who that bar him best in no disjoynt.
'"I wol not telle eek how that they ben goon
'"Hom til Athenes whan the pley is doon" [p. 91].

'The introduction of the clowns and their interlude was perhaps an afterthought. Again, in *The Knight's Tale*, we have this passage:—

'"Duk Theseus, and al his companye,
'"Is comen hom to Athenes his cité,
'"With alle blys and gret solempnité" [p. 83],

'which bears too remarkable a resemblance to what Theseus says in the *Midsummer* '*Night's Dream* to be accidental:—"Away with us to Athens: Three and three, '"We'll hold a feast in great solempnity" [IV, i, 202].

'In the Legende of Thisbe of Babylon we read:—

'"Thus wolde they seyn:—'Allas, thou wikked walle!
'"Thurgh thyn envye thow us lettest alle!'"—[line 51],

'which is certainly similar to the following line in Pyramus's address to Wall: "O '"wicked Wall, through whom I see no bliss!"'

The foregoing are all the extracts, I believe, which have been anywhere cited in proof of Steevens's suggestion, the value whereof has been correctly estimated, I think, by STAUNTON, who says (p. 476): 'The persistence [of the commentators] in 'assigning the groundwork of the fable to Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* is a remarkable 'instance of the docility with which succeeding writers will adopt, one after the other, 'an assertion that has really little or no foundation in fact. There is scarcely any

'resemblance whatever between Chaucer's tale and Shakespeare's play, beyond that 'of the scene in both being laid at the Court of Theseus. The Palamon, Arcite, and 'Emilie of the former are very different persons indeed from the Demetrius, Lysan-'der, Helena, and Hermia of the latter. Chaucer has made Duke Theseus a lead-'ing character in his story, and has ascribed the unearthly incidents to mythological 'personages, conformable to a legend which professes to narrate events that actually 'happened in Greece. Shakespeare, on the other hand, has merely adopted Theseus, 'whose exploits he was acquainted with through the pages of North's *Plutarch*, as a 'well-known character of romance, in subordination to whom the rest of the *dramatis* '*personæ* might fret their hour; and has employed for supernatural machinery those '"airy nothings" familiar to the literature and traditions of various people and nearly 'all ages. There is little at all in common between the two stories except the name 'of Theseus, the representative of which appears in Shakespeare simply as a prince 'who lived in times when the introduction of ethereal beings, such as Oberon, Tita-'nia, and Puck, was in accordance with tradition and romance.'

FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p. 185) says that Shakespeare got the name of Philostrate from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*.

TYRWHITT (*Introd.* p. 97, 1798), in discussing the original of *The Marchaunde's Tale*, says that he cannot help thinking that 'the *Pluto* and *Preserpina* in this tale 'were the true progenitors of *Oberon* and *Titania*, or rather, that they themselves 'have, once at least, deigned to revisit our poetical system under the latter names,'—a remark which would not have been repeated here had it not been repeated, more than once, elsewhere.

PYRAMUS AND THISBE

RITSON (*Remarks*, p. 47, 1783) in reference to *Pyramus and Thisbe* observes: 'There is an old pamphlet, containing the history of this amorous pair, in lamentable 'verse by one Dunstan Gale, which appears to have been printed in 1596; and may, 'not improbably, be found the butt of Shakespeare's ridicule in some parts of this 'interlude.'

MALONE, in a note on I, ii, 15, gives a later date: 'A poem entitled *Pyramus and* '*Thisbe*, by D. Gale, was published in 4to in 1597; but this, I believe, was posterior 'to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.' 'On the contrary,' says CHALMERS (*Sup. Apol.* p. 363), who also gives 1597 as the date, 'I believe that Gale's *Pyramus &* '*Thisbe* was prior to Shakespeare's "most lamentable comedy."'

COLLIER (*Bibliog. Account*, &c., 1865, ii, 43) thus allays the breeze evoked by Gale: 'No earlier edition [than 1617, of this poem] is known; but the dedication '"to the worshipfull his verie friend D. B. H." is dated by the author, Dunstan Gale, '"this 25th of November, 1596."' From the description and specimens of this 'poem' given by Collier, we need not 'desire it of more acquaintance'; nor with Dr. Muffet's *Silkworms and their Flies*, 1599, mentioned by COLLIER (*Ib.* i, 97) and by HALLIWELL *ad loc.*

STEEVENS mentions a license recorded in the *Stationers' Registers* (vol. i, p. 215, ed. Arber) as given to 'William greffeth,' in 1562, 'for pryntynge of a boke intituled 'Perymus and Thesbye.'

It appears to me to be almost childish to attempt to fix upon any single source (except possibly *Ovid*) as the authority to which Shakespeare went for a story, with which, in its every detail, the early literature of Europe abounds. Would it be possible to limit to one single writer the story of a pair of star-crost lovers, which had started in

Babylon under the shadow of the tomb of Ninus, was familiar to the Greeks and Romans, and used in the Middle Ages by pious monks as an allegory of the human soul?

The inquisitive reader is referred to a thorough and exhaustive compilation of the versions of this legend in Latin, in Greek, and in the ancient and modern literatures of France, Germany, Spain, Holland, Roumania, Italy, and England by Dr. GEORG HART (*Die Pyramus- & Thisbe-Sage*, Passau, 1889, and Part ii, 1891).

Many commentators have called attention to what they have assumed to be indications here and there of Shakespeare's having read the story of Pyramus and Thisbe in Golding's translation of *Ovid*. The story is here given from Golding (*The fourth booke*, 1567, p. 43, verso):—

Within the towne (of whose huge walles so monstrous high & thicke
The fame is giuen *Semyramis* for making them of bricke)
Dwelt hard together two yong folke in houses ioyned so nere
That vnder all one roofe well nie both twaine conueyed were.
The name of him was *Pyramus*, and *Thisbe* calde was she.
So faire a man in all the East was none aliue as he,
Nor nere a woman maide nor wife in beautie like to hir.
This neighbrod bred acquaintance first, this neyghbrod first did stirre
The secret sparkes, this neighbrod first an entrance in did showe,
For loue to come to that to which it afterward did growe.
And if that right had taken place they had bene man and wife,
But still their Parents went about to let which (for their life)
They could not let. For both their heartes with equall flame did burne.
No man was priuie to their thoughts. And for to serue their turne
In steade of talke they vsed signes, the closelier they supprest
The fire of loue, the fiercer still it raged in their brest.
The wall that parted house from house had riuen therein a crany
Which shronke at making of the wall, this fault not markt of any
Of many hundred yeares before (what doth not loue espie.)
These louers first of all found out, and made a way whereby
To talke togither secretly, and through the same did goe
Their louing whisprings verie light and safely to and fro.
Now as a toneside *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* on the tother
Stoode often drawing one of them the pleasant breath from other
O thou enuious wall (they sayd) why letst thou louers thus?
What matter were it if that thou permitted both of vs
In armes eche other to embrace? Or if thou thinke that this
Were ouermuch, yet mightest thou at least make roume to kisse.
And yet thou shalt not finde vs churles: we think our selues in det
For this same piece of courtesie, in vouching safe to let
Our sayings to our friendly eares thus freely come and goe,
Thus hauing where they stoode in vaine complayned of their woe,
When night drew nere, they bade adew and eche gaue kisses sweete
Vnto the parget on their side, the which did neuer meete.
Next morning with hir cherefull light had driuen the starres aside
And *Phebus* with his burning beames the dewie grasse had dride.
These louers at their wonted place by foreappointment met.
Where after much complaint and mone they couenanted to get
Away from such as watched them, and in the Euening late

To steale out of their fathers house and eke the Citie gate.
And to thentent that in the fieldes they strayde not vp and downe
They did agree at *Ninus* Tumb to meete without the towne,
And tarie vnderneath a tree that by the same did grow
Which was a faire high Mulberie with fruite as white as snow,
Hard by a cool and trickling spring. This bargaine pleasde them both
And so daylight (which to their thought away but slowly goth)
Did in the Ocean fall to rest, and night from thence doth rise.
Assoone as darkenesse once was come, straight *Thisbe* did deuise
A shift to wind hir out of doores, that none that were within
Perceyued hir: And muffling hir with clothes about hir chin,
That no man might discerne hir face, to *Ninus* Tumb she came
Vnto the tree, and sat hir downe there vnderneath the same.
Loue made hir bold. But see the chance, there comes besmerde with blood
About the chappes a Lionesse all foming from the wood
From slaughter lately made of Kine to staunch hir bloudie thurst
With water of the foresaid spring. Whome *Thisbe* spying furst
A farre by moonelight, therevpon with fearfull steppes gan flie,
And in a darke and yrkesome caue did hide hirselfe thereby.
And as she fled away for hast she let hir mantle fall
The whych for feare she left behind not looking backe at all.
Now when the cruell Lionesse hir thurst had stanched well,
In going to the Wood she found the slender weed that fell
From *Thisbe*, which with bloudie teeth in pieces she did teare
The night was somewhat further spent ere *Pyramus* came there
Who seeing in the suttle sande the print of Lions paw,
Waxt pale for feare. But when also the bloudie cloke he saw
All rent and torne, one night (he sayd) shall louers two confounde,
Of which long life deserued she of all that liue on ground.
My soule deserues of this mischaunce the perill for to beare.
I wretch haue bene the death of thee, which to this place of feare
Did cause thee in the night to come, and came not here before.
My wicked limmes and wretched guttes with cruell teeth therfore
Deuour ye O ye Lions all that in this rocke doe dwell.
But Cowardes vse to wish for death. The slender weede that fell
From *Thisbe* vp he takes, and streight doth beare it to the tree,
Which was appointed erst the place of meeting for to bee.
And when he had bewept and kist the garment which he knew,
Receyue thou my bloud too (quoth he) and therewithall he drew
His sworde, the which among his guttes he thrust, and by and by
Did draw it from the bleeding wound beginning for to die,
And cast himselfe vpon his backe, the blood did spin on hie
As when a Conduite pipe is crackt, the water bursting out
Doth shote itselfe a great way off and pierce the Ayre about.
The leaues that were vpon the tree besprincled with his blood
Were died blacke. The roote also bestained as it stoode,
A deepe darke purple colour straight vpon the Berries cast.
Anon scarce ridded of hir feare with which she was agast,
For doubt of disapointing him commes *Thisbe* forth in hast,

And for hir louer lookes about, reioycing for to tell
How hardly she had scapt that night the daunger that befell.
And as she knew right well the place and facion of the tree
(As whych she saw so late before): euen so when she did see
The colour of the Berries turnde, she was vncertain whither
It were the tree at which they both agreed to meete togither.
While in this doubtful stounde she stoode, she cast hir eye aside
And there beweltred in his bloud hir louer she espide
Lie sprawling with his dying limmes: at which she started backe,
And looked pale as any Box, a shuddring through hir stracke,
Euen like the Sea which sodenly with whissing noyse doth moue,
When with a little blast of winde it is but toucht aboue.
But when approching nearer him she knew it was hir loue.
She beate hir brest, she shricked out, she tare hir golden heares,
And taking him betweene hir armes did wash his wounds with teares,
She meynt hir weeping with his bloud, and kissing all his face
(Which now became as colde as yse) she cride in wofull case
Alas what chaunce my *Pyramus* hath parted thee and mee?
Make aunswere O my *Pyramus:* It is thy *Thisbe*, euen shee
Whome thou doste loue most heartely that speaketh vnto thee.
Giue eare and rayse thy heauie heade. He hearing *Thisbes* name,
Lift vp his dying eyes and hauing seene hir closde the same.
But when she knew hir mantle there and saw his scabberd lie
Without the swoorde: Vnhappy man thy loue hath made thee die:
Thy loue (she said) hath made thee slea thy selfe. This hand of mine
Is strong inough to doe the like. My loue no lesse than thine
Shall giue me force to worke my wound. I will pursue the dead.
And wretched woman as I am, it shall of me be sed
That like as of thy death I was the only cause and blame,
So am I thy companion eke and partner in the same,
For death which only couldo alas a sunder part vs twaine,
Shall neuer so disseuer vs but we will meete againe.
And you the Parentes of vs both, most wretched folke alyue,
Let this request that I shall make in both our names byliue
Entreate you to permit that we whome chaste and stedfast loue
And whome euen death hath ioynde in one, may as it doth behoue
In one graue be together layd. And thou vnhappie tree
Which shroudest now the corse of one, and shalt anon through mee
Shroude two, of this same slaughter holde the sicker signes for ay
Blacke be the colour of thy fruite and mourning like alway,
Such as the murder of vs twaine may euermore bewray.
This said, she tooke the sword yet warme with slaughter of hir loue
And setting it beneath hir brest, did to hir heart it shoue.
Hir prayer with the Gods and with their Parentes tooke effect.
For when the fruite is throughly ripe, the Berrie is bespect
With colour tending to a blacke. And that which after fire
Remained, rested in one Tumbe as *Thisbe* did desire.

BOSWELL (*Var.* '21, p. 193) observed that in *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites*, by Clement Robinson, 1584, there is 'A new Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie,'—a remark which would have been scarcely worth repeating, had not FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p. 186) asserted that 'the Pyramus interlude is clearly based on C. Robinson's *Handfull of Pleasant Delights*, 1584.' Boswell's allusion is clear enough: it is to the 'Sonet' signed 'I. Thomson.' But Fleay's is not so clear, inasmuch as in the 'Handfull,' besides Thomson's 'Sonet,' Pyramus is referred to by name in four other 'pleasant delights,' so that we might infer that it is to the number of the allusions to Pyramus that Fleay refers, and yet this would not account for employing Pyramus's story as an interlude. It is scarcely possible that Fleay could have referred, as the 'clear basis' of Shakespeare's interlude, to the following (p. 30, Arber's *Reprint*):—

A new Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie.
To the, Downe right Squier.

Ou Dames (I say) that climbe the mount
of *Helicon*,
Come on with me, and giue account,
what hath been don:
Come tell the chaunce ye Muses all,
and dolefull newes,
Which on these Louers did befall,
which I accuse.
In *Babilon* not long agone,
a noble Prince did dwell:
whose daughter bright dimd ech ones sight,
so farre she did excel.

An other Lord of high renowne,
who had a sonne:
And dwelling there within the towne
great loue begunne:
Pyramus this noble Knight,
I tel you true:
Who with the loue of *Thisbie* bright,
did cares renue:
It came to passe, their secrets was,
beknowne vnto them both:
And then in minde, their place do finde,
where they their loue vnclothe.

This loue they vse long tract of time,
till it befell:
At last they promised to meet at prime
by *Minus* well:
Where they might louingly imbrace,
in loues delight:
That he might see his *Thisbies* face
and she his sight:

In ioyfull case, she approcht the place,
where she her *Pyramus*
Had thought to viewd, but was renewd
to them most dolorous.

Thus while she staies for *Pyramus*,
there did proceed:
Out of the wood a Lion fierce,
made *Thisbie* dreed:
And as in haste she fled awaie,
her Mantle fine:
The Lion tare in stead of praie,
till that the time
That *Pyramus* proceeded thus,
and see how lion tare
The Mantle this of *Thisbie* his,
he desperately doth fare.

For why he thought the lion had,
faire *Thisbie* slaine.
And then the beast with his bright blade,
he slew certaine:
Then made he mone and said alas,
(O wretched wight)
Now art thou in a woful case
For *Thisbie* bright:
Oh Gods aboue, my faithfull loue
shal neuer faile this need:
For this my breath by fatall death,
shal weaue *Atropos* threed.

Then from his sheathe he drew his blade,
and to his hart
He thrust the point, and life did vade,
with painfull smart:
Then *Thisbie* she from cabin came
with pleasure great,
And to the well apase she ran,
there for to treat:
And to discusse, with *Pyramus*
of al her former feares.
And when slaine she, found him truly,
she shed foorth bitter teares.

When sorrow great that she had made,
she took in hand
The bloudie knife, to end her life,
by fatall hand.
You Ladies all, peruse and see,
the faithfulnesse,

How these two Louers did agree,
to die in distresse:
You Muses waile, and do not faile,
but still do you lament:
These louers twaine, who with such paine,
did die so well content.
Finis. *I. Thomson.*

GREENE'S HISTORY OF JAMES IV.

WARD (*Eng. Dram. Hist.* 1875, i, 380) says that 'the idea of the entire machinery of Oberon and his fairy-court was, in all probability, taken by Shakespeare from Greene's *Scottish History of James IV* (1590 *circ.*).'

STEEVENS called attention to this drama, but he did not know at the time that Greene was the author. WARD, to whose excellent guidance we can all trust, is so outspoken that it behoves us to examine this play of *James IV*, and we can do no better than to take WARD'S own account of it.

'I think,' says WARD (*Ibid.* p. 220), 'upon the whole the happiest of Greene's dramas is *The Scottish Historie of James IV, slaine at Flodden. Intermixed with a pleasant Comedie, presented by Oboram King of Fayeries* (printed in 1598). The title is deceptive, for the fatal field of Flodden is not included in the drama, which ends happily by the reconciliation of King James with his Queen Dorothea. Indeed, the plot of the play has no historical foundation; James IV's consort, though of course she was an English princess, as she is in the play, was named Margaret, not Dorothea; and King Henry VII never undertook an expedition to avenge any misdeeds committed against her by her husband. But though the play is founded on fiction, such as we may be astonished to find applied to an historical period so little remote from its spectators, it is very interesting; and, besides being symmetrically constructed, has passages both of vigour and pathos.' [Here follows the story, which, as it has no alleged connection with the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, is here omitted.] 'But though *The Scottish History of James IV* is both effective in its serious and amusing in its comic scenes, . . . Greene seems to have thought it necessary to give to it an adventitious attraction by what appears a quite superfluous addition. The title describes the play as "intermixed with a pleasant Comedie presented by Oboram King of Fayeries," but the "pleasant comedy," in point of fact, consists only of a brief prelude, in which Oberon and a misanthropical Scotchman named Bohan introduce the play as a story written down by the latter, and of dances and antics by the fairies between the acts, which are perfectly supererogatory intermezzos. The "history," or body of the play itself, is represented by a set of players, "guid fellows of Bohan's countrymen," before "Aster Oberon," who is the same personage as he who figures in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, though very differently drawn, if, indeed, he can be said to be drawn at all.'

That the reader may judge for himself how far Greene's Oberon ('Oboram' in the title appears to be a mere misprint; according to the texts of both Dyce and Grosart, it is uniformly 'Oberon' in the body of the play) is 'the same personage' as Shakespeare's Oberon, and to what extent 'it is probable' that 'the entire machinery of Oberon and his fairy court' was taken by Shakespeare from Greene, I will here give every line of the scenes and stage-directions wherein Oberon appears in *James IV*. It is of small moment if they are disjointed. As we are not now concerned

with Greene, but with Shakespeare, I follow Dyce's text of the play rather than Grosart's, albeit Dyce does not apparently reproduce the original as faithfully as Grosart reproduces it; the latter says, so corrupt is the original that 'Dyce must have taken 'infinite pains in the preparation of his text.' Moreover, as Dyce's text is modernised here and there, it is all the better for present purposes:—

The Play begins: *Music playing within. Enter* ASTER OBERON, *king of fairies, and an* ANTIC, *who dance about a tomb placed conveniently on the stage, out of the which suddenly starts up, as they dance,* BOHAN, *a Scot, attired like a ridstall man, from whom the* ANTIC *flies.* OBERON *manet.*

Boh. Ay say, what's thou?

Ober. Thy friend, Bohan.

Boh. What wot I, or reck I that? Whay, guid man, I reck no friend, nor ay reck no foe; als ene to me. Get thee ganging, and trouble not may whayet, or ays gar thee recon me nene of thay friend, by the mary mass sall I.

Ober. Why, angry Scot, I visit thee for love; then what moves thee to wrath?

Boh. The deil awhit reck I thy love; for I know too well that true love took her flight twenty winter sence to heaven, whither till ay can, weel I wot, ay sall ne'er find love; an thou lovest me, leave me to myself. But what were those puppets that hopped and skipped about me year whayle?

Ober. My subjects.

Boh. Thay subjects! whay, art thou a king?

Ober. I am.

Boh. The deil thou art! whay, thou lookest not so big as the king of clubs, nor so sharp as the king of spades, nor so fain as the king a' daymonds: be the mass, ay take thee to be the king of false hearts; therefore I rid thee, away or ayse so curry your kingdom, that you's be glad to run to save your life.

Ober. Why, stoical Scot, do what thou darest to me; here is my breast, strike.

Boh. Thou wilt not threap me, this whinyard has gard many better men to lope than thou. But how now? Gos sayds, what, wilt not out? Whay, thou witch, thou deil! Gads fute, may whinyard!

Ober. Why, pull, man: but what an 'twere out, how then?

Boh. This, then, thou wear't best begone first: for ay'l so lop thy limbs, that thou's go with half a knave's carcass to the deil.

Ober. Draw it out; now strike, fool, canst thou not?

Boh. Bread ay gad, what deil is in me? Whay, tell me, thou skipjack, what art thou?

Ober. Nay first tell me what thou wast from thy birth, what thou hast past hitherto, why thou dwellest in a tomb, and leavest the world? and then I will release thee of these bonds; before, not.

Boh. And not before! then needs must, needs sall. I was born a gentleman of the best blood in all Scotland, except the king. When time brought me to age, and death took my parents, I became a courtier, where though ay list not praise myself, ay engraved the memory of Bohan on the skin-coat of some of them, and revelled with the proudest.

Ober. But why living in such reputation, didst thou leave to be a courtier?

Boh. Because my pride was vanity, my expense loss, my reward fair words and large promises, and my hopes spilt, for that after many years' service one outran me,

and what the deil should I then do there? No, no; flattering knaves that can cog and prate fastest, speed best in the court.

Ober. To what life didst thou then betake thee?

Boh. I then changed the court for the country, and the wars for a wife: but I found the craft of swains more wise than the servants, and wives' tongues worse than the wars itself, and therefore I gave o'er that, and went to the city to dwell: and there I kept a great house with small cheer, but all was ne'er the near.

Ober. And why?

Boh. Because, in seeking friends, I found table-guests to eat me and my meat, my wife's gossips to bewray the secrets of my heart, kindred to betray the effect of my life: which when I noted, the court ill, the country worse, and the city worst of all, in good time my wife died,—ay would she had died twenty winter sooner by the mass,—leaving my two sons to the world, and shutting myself into this tomb, where if I die, I am sure I am safe from wild beasts, but whilst I live I cannot be free from ill company. Besides now I am sure gif all my friends fail me, I sall have a grave of mine own providing, this is all. Now, what art thou?

Ober. Oberon, king of fairies, that loves thee because thou hatest the world; and to gratulate thee, I brought these Antics to show thee some sport in dancing, which thou hast loved well.

Boh. Ha, ha, ha! Thinkest thou those puppets can please me? whay, I have two sons, that with one Scottish jig shall break the necks of thy Antics.

Ober. That I would fain see.

Boh. Why, thou shalt. How, boys!

Enter SLIPPER *and* NANO.

Haud your clucks, lads, trattle not for thy life, but gather opp your legs and dance me forthwith a jig worth the sight.

Slip. Why, I must talk, an I die for 't: wherefore was my tongue made?

Boh. Prattle, an thou darest, one word more, and ais dab this whinyard in thy womb.

Ober. Be quiet, Bohan. I'll strike him dumb, and his brother too; their talk shall not hinder our jig. Fall to it, dance, I say, man.

Boh. Dance Heimore, dance, ay rid thee.

[*The two dance a jig devised for the nonst.*

Now get you to the wide world with more than my father gave me, that's learning enough both kinds, knavery and honesty; and that I gave you, spend at pleasure.

Ober. Nay, for this sport I will give them this gift; to the dwarf I give a quick wit, pretty of body, and a warrant his preferment to a prince's service, where by his wisdom he shall gain more love than common; and to loggerhead your son I give a wandering life, and promise he shall never lack, and avow that, if in all distresses he call upon me, to help him. Now let them go.

[*Exeunt Slipper and Nano with courtesies.*

Boh. Now, king, if thou be a king, I will shew thee whay I hate the world by demonstration. In the year 1520, was in Scotland a king, over-ruled with parasites, misled by lust, and many circumstances too long to trattle on now, much like our court of Scotland this day. That story have I set down. Gang with me to the gallery and I'll shew thee the same in action, by guid fellows of our countrymen, and then when thou see'st that, judge if any wise man would not leave the world if he could.

Ober. That will I see: lead, and I'll follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

[The drama of *James IV* here begins, and at the conclusion of the First Act

Bohan and Oberon again appear, and speak as follows. Of their interview Dyce says (p. 94), 'the whole of what follows, till the beginning of the next act, is a mass of 'confusion and corruption. The misprints here defy emendation.']

Enter BOHAN *and* OBERON *the Fairy-king, after the first act; to them a round of Fairies, or some pretty dance.*

Boh. Be gad, grammercies, little king, for this;
This sport is better in my exile life
Than ever the deceitful world could yield.
Ober. I tell thee, Bohan, Oberon is king
Of quiet, pleasure, profit, and content,
Of wealth, of honour, and of all the world;
Tied to no place, yet all are tied to me.
Live thou in this life, exil'd from world and men,
And I will shew thee wonders ere we part.
Boh. Then mark my story, and the strange doubts
That follow flatterers, lust, and lawless will,
And then say I have reason to forsake
The world and all that are within the same.
Go, shrowd us in our harbour where we'll see
The pride of folly as it ought to be. [*Exeunt.*

After the first Act.

Ober. Here see I good fond actions in thy jig,
And means to paint the world's inconstant ways;
But turn thine ene, see what I can command.

[*Enter two battles, strongly fighting, the one* SEMIRAMIS, *the other* STABROBATES: *she flies, and her crown is taken, and she hurt.*

Boh. What gars this din of mirk and baleful harm,
Where every wean is all betaint with blood?
Ober. This shews thee, Bohan, what is worldly pomp:
Semiramis, the proud Assyrian queen,
When Ninus died, did tene in her wars
Three millions of footmen to the fight,
Five hundred thousand horse, of armed cars
A hundred thousand more, yet in her pride
Was hurt and conquer'd by Stabrobates.
Then what is pomp?
Boh. I see thou art thine ene,
The bonny king, if princes fall from high:
My fall is past, until I fall to die.
Now mark my talk, and prosecute my jig.
Ober. How should these crafts withdraw thee from the world!
But look, my Bohan, pomp allureth.

[*Enter* CYRUS, *kings humbling themselves; himself crowned by olive Pat: at last dying, laid in a marble tomb, with this inscription*

Whoso thou be that passest by
For I know one shall pass, know I
I am Cyrus of Persia,
And, I prithee, leave me not thus like a clod of clay
Wherewith my body is covered. [*All exeunt.*

[*Enter the king in great pomp, who reads it, and issueth, crieth vermeum.*

Boh. What meaneth this?

Ober. Cyrus of Persia,
Mighty in life, within a marble grave
Was laid to rot, whom Alexander once
Beheld entomb'd, and weeping did confess,
Nothing in life could scape from wretchedness:
Why then boast men?

Boh. What reck I then of life,
Who makes the grave my tomb, the earth my wife?

Ober. But mark me more.

Boh. I can no more, my patience will not warp
To see these flatteries how they scorn and carp.

Ober. Turn but thy head.

[*Enter four kings carrying crowns, ladies presenting odours to potentate enthroned, who suddenly is slain by his servants, and thrust out; and so, they eat.* [*Exeunt.*

Boh. Sike is the world; but whilk is he I saw?

Ober. Sesostris, who was conqueror of the world
Slain at the last, and stamp'd on by his slaves.

Boh. How blest are peur men then that know their graves!
Now mark the sequel of my jig;
An he weele meet ends. The mirk and sable night
Doth leave the peering morn to pry abroad;
Thou nill me stay; hail then, thou pride of kings!
I ken the world, and wot well worldly things.
Mark thou my jig, in mirkest terms that tells
The loath of sins, and where corruption dwells.
Hail me ne mere with shows of guidly sights;
My grave is mine, that rids me from despights;
Accept my jig, guid king, and let me rest;
The grave with guid men is a gay-built nest.

Ober. The rising sun doth call me hence away;
Thanks for thy jig, I may no longer stay;
But if my train did wake thee from thy rest,
So shall they sing thy lullaby to nest. [*Exeunt*

[At the end of the Second Act]

Enter BOHAN *with* OBERON.

Boh. So, Oberon, now it begins to work in kind.
The ancient lords by leaving him alone,
Disliking of his humours and despite,
Let him run headlong, till his flatterers,
Sweeting his thoughts of luckless lust
With vile persuasions and alluring words,
Make him make way by murder to his will.
Judge, fairy king, hast heard a greater ill?

Ober. Nor seen more virtue in a country maid.
I tell thee, Bohan, it doth make me merry,

To think the deeds the king means to perform.
Boh. To change that humour, stand and see the rest
I trow, my son Slipper will shew's a jest.
[*Enter* SLIPPER *with a companion, boy or wench, dancing a hornpipe, and dance out again.*
Boh. Now after this beguiling of our thoughts,
And changing them from sad to better glee,
Let's to our cell, and sit and see the rest,
For, I believe, this jig will prove no jest. [*Exeunt.*

[At the end of the Third Act Bohan appears alone, and from him we learn that the sadness of the act has put Oberon to sleep. At the conclusion of the Fourth Act]

Chorus. *Enter* BOHAN *and* OBERON.
Ober. Believe me, bonny Scot, these strange events
Are passing pleasing, may they end as well.
Boh. Else say that Bohan hath a barren skull,
If better motions yet than any past
Do not more glee to make the fairy greet.
But my small son made pretty handsome shift
To save the queen, his mistress, by his speed.
Ober. Yea, and yon laddy, for the sport he made,
Shall see, when least he hopes, I'll stand his friend,
Or else he capers in a halter's end.
Boh. What, hang my son! I trow not, Oberon;
I'll rather die than see him woe begone.
Enter a round, or some dance at pleasure.
Ober. Bohan, be pleas'd, for do they what they will,
Here is my hand, I'll save thy son from ill. [*Exeunt.*

[In fulfillment of this promise Oberon appears towards the close of the Fifth Act, and, accompanied by Antics, silently conveys away Bohan's son, Slipper, who is in jeopardy of his life.

The foregoing extracts comprise all that Oberon does or says in the play. As far as Ward's suggestion is concerned, assent or dissent is left to the reader.]

WARD (vol. i, p. 380) says that the 'story of the magic potion [*sic*, evidently a 'mere slip of memory] and its effects Shakspeare may have found in Montemayor's '*Diana*, though the translation of this book was not published till 1598.'

It is not the 'love juice,' but 'some of the fairy story,' which FLEAY (*Life and Work*, p. 186) says 'may have been suggested by Montemayor's *Diana*.' I think Fleay overlooks the fact that if, as he maintains, the date of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in its present shape, be 1595, it is impossible that Shakespeare could have obtained any suggestions from a book published three years later, in 1598.

I have toiled through the four hundred and ninety-six weary, dreary, falsetto, folio pages of Montemayor's *Diana*, without finding any conceivable suggestion for 'the fairy story,' other than that of the love-juice to which WARD, I think, alludes; here the hint is so broad compared with others which have been proclaimed as surely adopted elsewhere by Shakespeare, that I wonder the assertion of direct 'convey-'ance' has not been made here; to be sure we are met by the fact that Meres and

Montemayor both bear the same date; but then have we not the extremely convenient and highly accommodating refuge: that Shakespeare may have read Yong's translation in manuscript before it was published, most especially since Yong's translation is dedicated to Lady Penelope Rich, who figures, as we are assured, so freely in Shakespeare's *Sonnets?*

The passage from Yong's translation of the *Diana of George of Montemayor*, 1598, p. 123, is as follows: (it should be premised, however, that Felicia, a noble lady, 'whose course of life and onely exercise, in her stately court, is to cure and 'remedie the passions of loue,' is about to show her art to Felismena, a shepherdess temporarily blighted, and that the objects of Felicia's skill are—first, Syrenus, a shepherd immeasurably in love with a shepherdess, Diana, who in turn immeasurably loved Syrenus, but in some unaccountable way she forgot him during his temporary absence, and casually married Delius, in consequence whereof Syrenus is called 'the forgotten shepherd'; second, Silvanus, who is also in love with Diana, but by her despised, and he is called 'the despised Silvanus'; and thirdly, Silvagia, a shepherdess illimitably in love with Alanius, who, subject to his cruel father's will, cannot marry her.):—

'The Lady *Felicia* saide to *Felismena*. Entertaine this company [Syrenus, Sil-'vanus, Silvagia and others] while I come hither againe: and going into a chamber, 'it was not long before she came out againe with two cruets of fine cristall in either 'hande, the feete of them being beaten golde, and curiously wrought and enameled: 'And coming to *Syrenus*, she saide vnto him. If there were any other remedy for 'thy greefe (forgotten Shepherd) but this, I woulde with all possible diligence haue 'sought it out, but because thou canst not now enioy her, who loued thee once so 'well, without anothers death, which is onely in the handes of God, of necessitie 'then thou must embrace another remedie, to auoide the desire of an impossible 'thing. And take thou, faire *Seluagia*, and despised *Syluanus*, this glasse, wherein 'you shall finde a soueraine remedie for all your sorrowes past & present; and a 'beginning of a ioyfull and contented life, whereof you do now so little imagine. 'And taking the cristall cruet, which she helde in her left hande, she gaue it to '*Syrenus*, and badde him drinke; and *Syrenus* did so; and *Syluanus* and *Seluagia* 'drunke off the other betweene them, and in that instant they fell all downe to the 'ground in a deepe sleepe, which made *Filismena* not a little to woonder, . . . and 'standing halfe amazed at the deepe sleepe of the shepherdes, saide to *Felicia*: If 'the ease of these Shepherds (good Ladie) consisteth in sleeping (me thinkes) they 'haue it in so ample sort, that they may liue the most quiet life in the worlde. 'Woonder not at this (saide *Felicia*) for the water they drunke hath such force, that, 'as long as I will, they shall sleepe so strongly, that none may be able to awake 'them. And because thou maist see, whether it be so or no, call one of them as 'loude as thou canst. *Felismena* then came to *Syluanus*, and pulling him by the 'arme, began to call him aloud, which did profite her as little, as if she had spoken 'to a dead body; and so it was with *Syrenus* and *Seluagia*, whereat *Felismena* mar-'uelled very much. And then *Felicia* saide vnto her. Nay, thou shalt maruel yet 'more, after they awake, bicause thou shalt see so strange a thing, as thou didst neuer 'imagine the like. And because the water hath by this time wrought those opera-'tions, that it shoulde do, I will awake them, and marke it well, for thou shalt heare 'and see woonders. Whereupon taking a booke out of her bosome, she came to '*Syrenus*, and smiting him vpon the head with it, the Shepherd rose vp on his feete 'in his perfect wits and judgement: To whom *Felicia* saide. Tell me *Syrenus*, if

'thou mightest now see faire *Diana*, & her vnworthy husband both togither in all the 'contentment and ioy of the worlde, laughing at thy loue, and making a sport of thy 'teares and sighes, what wouldest thou do? Not greeue me a whit (good Lady) but 'rather helpe them to laugh at my follies past. But if she were now a maide againe, '(saide *Felicia*) or perhaps a widow, and would be married to *Syluanus* and not to 'thee, what wouldst thou then do? Myselfe woulde be the man (saide *Syrenus*) that 'woulde gladly helpe to make such a match for my friende. What thinkest thou of 'this *Felismena* (saide *Felicia*) that water is able to vnloose the knottes that peruerse 'Loue doth make? I woulde neuer haue thought (saide *Felismena*) that anie humane 'skill coulde euer attaine to such diuine knowledge as this. And looking on *Syrenus*, 'she saide vnto him. Howe nowe *Syrenus*, what meanes this? Are the teares and 'sighes whereby thou didst manifest thy loue and greefe, so soone ended? Since 'my loue is nowe ended (said *Syrenus*) no maruell then, if the effects proceeding from 'it be also determined. And is it possible now (said *Felismena*) that thou wilt loue '*Diana* no more? I wish her as much good (answered *Syrenus*) as I doe to your 'owne selfe (faire Lady) or to any other woman that neuer offended me. But '*Felicia*, seeing how *Felismena* was amazed at the sudden alteration of *Syrenus*, said. 'With this medicine I would also cure thy greefe (faire *Felismena*) and thine *Belisa* '[another blighted shepherdess] if fortune did not deferre them to some greater con-'tent, then onely to enioy your libertee. And bicause thou maist see how diuersly 'the medicines haue wrought in *Syluanus* and *Seluagia*, it shall not be amisse to 'awake them, for now they haue slept ynough: wherefore laying her booke vpon '*Syluanus* his head, he rose vp, saying. O faire *Seluagia*, what a great offence and 'folly haue I committed, by imploying my thoughtes vpon another, after that mine 'eies did once behold thy rare beautie? What meanes this *Syluanus* (said *Felicia*). 'No woman in the world euen now in thy mouth, but thy Shepherdesse *Diana*, and 'now so suddenly changed to *Seluagia*? *Syluanus* answering her, said. As the 'ship (discreete Lady) sailes floting vp and downe, and well-ny cast away in the 'vnknowen seas, without hope of a secure hauen: so did my thoughtes (putting my 'life in no small hazard) wander in *Dianas* loue, all the while, that I pursued it. 'But now since I am safely arriued into a hauen, of all ioy and happinesse, I onely 'wish I may haue harbour and entertainment there, where my irremooueable and 'infinite loue is so firmely placed. *Felismena* was as much astonished at the seconde 'kinde of alteration of Syluanus, as at that first of *Syrenus*, and therefore saide vnto 'him laughing. What dost thou *Syluanus*? Why dost thou not awake *Seluagia*? 'for ill may a Shepherdesse heare thee, that is so fast asleepe. *Syluanus* then pull-'ing her by the arme, began to speake out aloud vnto her, saying. Awake faire *Sel-'uagia*, since thou hast awaked my thoughtes out of the drowsie slumber of passed 'ignorance. Thrise happy man, whom fortune hath put in the happiest estate that I 'could desire. What dost thou meane faire Shepherdesse, dost thou not heare me, 'or wilt thou not answere me? Behold the impatient passion of the loue I beare 'thee, will not suffer me to be vnheard. O my *Seluagia*, sleepe not so much, and let 'not thy slumber be an occasion to make the sleepe of death put out my vitall lightes. 'And seeing how little it auailed him, by calling her, he began to powre foorth such 'abundance of teares, that they, that were present, could not but weepe also for tender 'compassion: whereupon *Felicia* saide vnto him. Trouble not thy selfe *Syluanus*, 'for as I will make *Seluagia* answere thee, so shall not her answere be contrarie to 'thy desire, and taking him by the hand, she led him into a chamber, and said vnto 'him. Depart not from hence, vntill I call thee; and then she went againe to the

'place where *Seluagia* lay, and touching her with her booke, awaked her, as she had 'done the rest and saide vnto her. Me thinks thou hast slept securely Shepherdesse. 'O good Lady (said she) where is my *Syluanus*, was he not with me heere? O God, 'who hath carried him away from hence? or wil he come hither againe? Harke to 'me *Seluagia*, said *Felicia*, for me thinkes thou art not wel in thy wits. Thy beloued '*Alanius* is without, & saith that he hath gone wandring vp and downe in many 'places seeking after thee, and hath got his fathers good will to marrie thee: which 'shall as little auaile him (said *Seluagia*) as the sighes and teares which once in vaine 'I powred out, and spent for him, for his memorie is now exiled out of my thoughts. '*Syluanus* mine onely life and ioy, O *Syluanus* is he, whom I loue. O what is 'become of my *Syluanus?* Where is my *Syluanus?* Who hearing the Shepherdesse '*Seluagia* no sooner name him, could stay no longer in the chamber, but came run-'ning into the hall vnto her, where the one beheld the other with such apparaunt 'signes of cordiall affection, and so strongly confirmed by the mutual bonds of their 'knowen deserts, that nothing but death was able to dissolue it; whereat *Syrenus*, '*Felismena*, and the Shepherdesse were passing ioyfull. And *Felicia* seeing them all 'in this contentment, said vnto them. Now is it time for you Shepherds, and faire 'Shepherdesse to goe home to your flocks, which would be glad to heare the wonted 'voice of their knowen masters.'

It may be perhaps a relief to sympathetic hearts to know that Lady Felicia, as well as Oberon, possessed an antidote, and that Syrenus did not for ever remain insensible to Diana's charms. The very instant that he learned that Delius was dead and Diana a widow 'his hart began somewhat to alter and change.' But to screen him from any imputation of fickleness we are told (p. 466) that this change was wrought by supernatural means, and, what is most noteworthy (I marvel it escaped the commentators) among the means is an HERB,—beyond all question this herb is 'Dian's bud.' Did not the Lady Felicia live at the Goddess Diana's temple? Any 'herb,' any 'bud' whatsoever that she administered would be 'Dian's bud.' It is comfortable again to catch Shakespeare at his old tricks. The original passage reads thus: 'There did the secret power also of sage *Felicia* worke extraordinary effects, 'and though she was not present there, yet with her *herbes* [Italics, mine.] and 'wordes, which were of great virtue, and by many other supernaturall meanes, she 'brought to passe that *Syrenus* began now againe to renewe his old loue to *Diana*.'

WARD (i, 380) says: 'I cannot quite understand whether Klein (*Gesch. des 'Dramas*, iv, 386) considers Shakespeare in any sense indebted to the Italian comedy 'of the *Intrighi d'Amore*, which has been erroneously attributed to Torquato Tasso.'

I doubt if KLEIN had that idea in his thoughts. I think he merely holds up, in his loyalty to Shakespeare, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* as the pattern of all comedies of *intrighi d'amore*. KLEIN'S extraordinary command of language and vehemence of style make his purpose, at times, difficult to comprehend. The following is the passage referred to by Ward, and it is all the more befitting to cite it here, because in a footnote he runs a tilt at Schöll and Ulrici:—

'With love-tangles, as, for example, in the scene [Klein is speaking of the Italian 'Comedy] where both Flamminio and Camillo woo Ersilia at the same time, and she, 'out of spite at the vexations she had received from her favorite Camillo, favours 'Flamminio,—with similar love-tangles and capricious waverings of heart the play of 'chance teases the lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but with what charms,

with what poetic magic are the *intrighi d'amore* here brought into play by delicate 'fairies, like symbolically personified winks and hints of an elfin world playing among 'the very forces of nature; a sportive, fantastic bewitchery of Nature; like a caprice 'of the spirit of Nature itself, through whose teasing play there gleams the pathos of 'the comic; an indication that what in the human world is apparent chance, is divine 'foresight and providence, which the roguish Puck presents to us as a piece of jug-'glery. There is but one genuine comedy of the *Intrighi d'amore*, of love's caprices; '—the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Lavinia [in the Italian comedy] is introduced 'as a byeplay to vindicate the theme of love-tangles. Lavinia loves the silly fop Gia-'laise, a Neapolitan, who, in turn, is silly for Lavinia's maid, Pasquina; who raves for 'Flavio, the son of Manilio. Flavio, disguised as a Moor, escapes from his father 'and hires out to a Neapolitan in order to be near Lavinia to whom he has lost his 'heart. Manilio recovers his son, the Moor, like a black meal bug in a meal bag, 'wherein he was about to be conveyed to Lavinia's presence. Finally, Lavinia's and 'Flavio's souls coalesce in marriage. Thus portrayed, the whims of love and the 'caprices of the heart are barren imbecilities, the mental abortions of a lunatic. 'Think for a minute of Puck and his "Love-in-idleness" * squeezed on the slumber-'ing eyelids of the lovers!

'Must we not believe that the mighty British poet was born, serenely and smil-'ingly to accomplish, with regard to the stage, that purpose, to which, in regard to its 'prototype, his own Hamlet succumbed?—namely, to put right the stage world which 'in the Italian comedy was out of joint?'

HALLIWELL (*Memoranda*, pp. 9–12, 1879) has given many allusions to various scenes and phrases in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to be found in the literature of the seventeenth century, but as they are all subsequent to 1600 they belong to Dramatic History, and illustrate no Shakespearian question other than the popularity of the play.

The following extracts from the *THE FAERIE QUEENE* are the passages to which, it is to be presumed, Dr JOHNSON referred when he said: 'Fairies in [Shake-'speare's] time were much in fashion; common tradition had made them familiar, 'and Spenser's poem had made them great.'

In the Second Book, Tenth Canto we are told (line 631):—

'—how first *Prometheus* did create
A man, of many partes from beasts deriued,
And then stole fire from heauen, to animate
His worke, for which he was by *Ioue* deprived
Of life him selfe, and hart-strings of an Ægle riued.

'That man so made, he called *Elfe*, to weet
Quick, the first authour of all Elfin kind:
Who wandring through the world with wearie feet,
Did in the gardins of *Adonis* find

---

* 'This flower, the emblem of capricious phantasy, is the key of the whole play. Neither Schöll nor Ulrici has adequately appreciated this.'

A goodly creature, whom he deemd in mind
To be no earthly wight, but either Spright,
Or Angell, th' authour of all woman kind;
Therefore a *Fay* he her according hight,
Of whom all *Faeryes* spring, and fetch their lignage right.

'Of these a mightie people shortly grew,
And puissaunt kings, which all the world warrayd,
And to them selues all Nations did subdew:
The first and eldest, which that scepter swayd,
Was *Elfin*; him all *India* obayd,
And all that now *America* men call:
Next him was noble *Elfinan*, who layd
Cleopolis foundation first of all:
But *Elfiline* enclosd it with a golden wall.

'His sonne was *Elfinell*, who ouercame
The wicked *Gobbelines* in bloudy field:
But *Elfant* was of most renowmed fame,
Who all of Christall did *Panthea* build:
Then *Elfar*, who two brethren gyants kild,
The one of which had two heads, th' other three:
Then *Elfinor*, who was in Magick skild;
He built by art vpon the glassy See
A bridge of bras, whose sound heauens thunder seem'd to bee.

'He left three sonnes, the which in order raynd,
And all their Ofspring, in their dew descents,
Euen seuen hundred Princes, which maintaynd
With mightie deedes their sundry gouernments;
That were too long their infinite contents
Here to record, ne much materiall:
Yet should they be most famous moniments,
And braue ensample, both of martiall,
And ciuill rule to kings and states imperiall.

'After all these *Elficleos* did rayne,
The wise *Elficleos* in great Maiestie,
Who mightily that scepter did sustayne,
And with rich spoiles and famous victorie,
Did high aduaunce the crowne of *Faery*:
He left two sonnes, of which faire *Elferon*
The eldest brother did vntimely dy;
Whose emptie place the mightie *Oberon*
Doubly supplide, in spousall, and dominion.

'Great was his power and glorie ouer all,
Which him before, that sacred seat did fill,
That yet remaines his wide memoriall:
He dying left the fairest *Tanaquill*,

Him to succeede therein, by his last will:
Fairer and nobler liueth none this howre,
Ne like in grace, ne like in learned skill;
Therefore they *Glorian* call that glorious flowre:
Long mayst thou *Glorian* liue, in glory and great powre.'

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

KEIGHTLEY (*Fairy Myth.* 1833, ii, 127): 'Shakespeare seems to have attempted 'a blending of the Elves of the village with the Fays of romance. His Fairies agree 'with the former in their diminutive stature,—diminished, indeed, to dimensions inap- 'preciable by village gossips,—in their fondness for dancing, their love of cleanliness, 'and in their child-abstracting propensities. Like the Fays, they form a community, 'ruled over by the princely Oberon and the fair Titania. There is a court and chiv- 'alry; Oberon, . . . like earthly monarchs, has his jester, "the shrewd and knavish '"sprite, called Robin Good-fellow."'

'The name of Robin Goodfellow,' says HALLIWELL (*Introd.* p. 37, 1841), 'had, it appears, been familiar to the English as early as the thirteenth century, being men- 'tioned in a tale preserved in a manuscript of that date in the Bodleian Library at 'Oxford.'

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. xvii): 'Tyndale, in his *Obedience of a Christian 'Man* (Parker, Soc. ed. p. 321), says, "The pope is kin to Robin Goodfellow, which '"sweepeth the house, washeth the dishes, and purgeth all, by night; but when day '"cometh, there is nothing found clean." And again, in his *Exposition of the 1st 'Epistle of St. John* (Parker Soc. ed. p. 139), "By reason whereof the scripture . . . '"is become a maze unto them, in which they wander as in a mist, or (as we say) led '"by Robin Goodfellow, that they cannot come to the right way, no, though they turn '"their caps."'

In Reginald Scot's *The discouerie of witchcraft*, &c., 1584, Robin Goodfellow is many times mentioned by name. 'I hope you understand,' says Scot, speaking of the birth of Merlin (4 Booke, chap. 10, p. 67, ed. Nicholson), 'that they affirme and saie, 'that *Incubus* is a spirit; and I trust you know that a spirit hath no flesh nor bones, '&c: and that he neither dooth eate nor drinke. In deede your grandams maides 'were woont to set a boll of milke before him and his cousine Robin good-fellow, for 'grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight; and you haue 'also heard that he would chafe exceedingly, if the maid or good-wife of the house, 'hauing compassion of his nakedness, laid anie clothes for him, beesides his messe of 'white bread and milke, which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith; 'What have we here? Hemton hamten, here will I neuer more tread nor stampen.'

Again, in a passage quoted in this edition to illustrate *urchins*, in *The Tempest*, I, ii, 385, Scot says (7 Booke, chap. xv, p. 122, ed. Nicholson): 'It is a common saieng; 'A lion feareth no bugs. But in our childhood our mothers maids haue so terrified 'vs with an ouglie divell having hornes on his head, fier in his mouth . . . eies like a 'bason, fanges like a dog, clawes like a beare, a skin like a Niger, and a voice roring 'like a lion, whereby we start and are afraid when we heare one crie Bough: and they 'have so fraied us with bull beggers, spirits, witches, urchens, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, 'pans, faunes, sylens, kit with the cansticke, tritons, centaurs, dwarfes, giants, imps,

'calcars, conjurors, nymphes, changlings, *Incubus*, Robin good-fellowe, the spoorne, 'the mare, the man in the oke, the hell waine, the fierdrake, the puckle, Tom thombe, 'hobgoblin, Tom tumbler, boneles, and such other bugs, that we are afraid of our 'owne shadowes; in so much as some never feare the divell, but in a darke night; 'and then a polled sheepe is a perillous beast, and manie times is taken for our fathers 'soule, speciallie in a churchyard, where a right hardie man heretofore scant durst 'passe by night, but his haire would stand upright.'

Again, in a noteworthy passage (7 Booke, chap. 2, p. 105, ed. Nicholson): 'And 'know you this by the waie, that heretofore Robin goodfellow, and Hob gobblin were 'as terrible, and also as credible to the people, as hags and witches be now: and in 'time to come, a witch will be as much derided and contemned, and as plainlie per-'ceived, as the illusion and knaverie of Robin goodfellow. And in truth, they that 'mainteine walking spirits, with their transformation, &c: have no reason to denie 'Robin goodfellow, upon whom there hath gone as manie and as credible tales, as 'upon witches; saving that it hath not pleased the translators of the Bible, to call 'spirits by the name of Robin goodfellow, as they have termed divinors, soothsaiers, 'poisoners, and couseners by the name of witches.'

HALLIWELL (*Mem.* p. 27, 1879) notes that Tarlton, in his '*Newes out of Purga-'torie*, 1589, says of Robin Goodfellow that he was "famozed in everie old wives '"chronicle, for his mad merrye prankes."' And again (p. 27), 'Nash, in his *Ter-'rors of the Night*, 1594, observes that the Robin Goodfellowes, elfes, fairies, hob-'goblins of our latter age, did most of their merry pranks in the night: then ground 'they malt, and had hempen shirts for their labours, daunst in greene meadows, 'pincht maids in their sleep that swept not their houses cleane, and led poor travel-'lers out of their way notoriously.'

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. xix) quotes from Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Imposture* (p. 134), a passage to the same effect as the former quotation from Scot, in regard to the necessity of 'duly setting out the bowle of curds and creame for Robin 'Goodfellow.' But although it has been assumed that Shakespeare was familiar with Harsnet's book when he wrote *King Lear*, its date, 1603, is too late for this present play. The same is true also of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621, albeit a passage cited by W. A. WRIGHT from Part I, Sec. ii, Mem. I, Subs. ii, contains one noteworthy sentence; speaking of hobgoblins and Robin Goodfellows, and the Ambulones' that mislead travellers, Burton says: 'These have several names in several places; we commonly call them *pucks*.'

COLLIER edited for the Percy Society, 1841, a rare tract, called *Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Jests*, dated 1628. Of it, in his edition, he says, 'there 'is little doubt that it originally came out at least forty years earlier,' and added that 'a ballad inserted in the Introduction to that Reprint, shows how Shakespeare availed 'himself of popular superstitions.' HALLIWELL (*Fairy Myth.* p. 120, 1845, ed. Shak. Soc.) agrees with Collier in the probability that this tract is of a much earlier production than 1628, and, 'although we have no proof of the fact, [it] had most 'likely been seen by Shakespeare in some form or other.'

R. G. WHITE, among editors and critics, has given the most attention to this claim of precedence, and has, I think, quite demolished it. The task seems scarcely worth

the pains. The Robin Goodfellow of the 'Mad Prankes,' like the Oberon of romance, has nothing in common, but the name, with Shakespeare's Puck. He is merely a low, lying buffoon, whose coarse jokes are calculated to evoke the horse laughter of boors. Nevertheless, as COLLIER afterwards asserted in a note to *The Devil and the Scold*, in his Roxburghe Ballads, that the '*Mad Prankes* had been published before '1588,' R. G. WHITE'S settlement of the question deserves a place here. He says (*Introd.* p. 9): 'Collier's reasons for this decision, which has not been questioned 'hitherto, are to be found only in the following passage in his Introduction to the edi-'tion of the *Mad Prankes*, published by the Percy Society: "There is no doubt that '"*Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Prankes and Merry Jests* was printed before 1588. '"Tarlton, the celebrated comic actor, died late in that year, and just after his decease '"(as is abundantly established by internal evidence, though the work has no date) '"came out in [*sic*] a tract called *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie, &c., Published* '"*by an old companion of his Robin Goodfellow;* and on sign. A 3 we find it asserted '"that Robin Goodfellow was 'famozed in every old wives chronicle for his mad '"'merrye prankes,' as if at that time the incidents detailed in the succeeding pages '"were all known, and had been frequently related. Four years earlier Robin Good-'"fellow had been mentioned by Anthony Munday in his comedy of *Two Italian* '"*Gentlemen*, printed in 1584, and there his other familiar name of Hobgoblin is '"also assigned to him."

'. . . The assertion in the *Newes out of Purgatorie*, that Robin Goodfellow and 'his tricks were told of in every old wife's chronicle, certainly does show that the 'incidents related in the *Merry Pranks* were, at least in a measure, "known, and '"had been frequently related" previous to the appearance of the former publica-'tion; but it neither establishes any sort of connection between the two works, nor 'has the slightest bearing upon the question of the order in which they were written; '. . . to suppose that the old wives derived their stories of Robin from the author of '*Mad Pranks*, is just to reverse that order of events which results from the very nature 'of things; it is the author who records and puts into shape the old wives' stories. . . . 'There is, then, no reason for believing that the *Merry Pranks* is an older composi-'tion than the *Newes out of Purgatorie*, but there are reasons which lead to the con-'clusion that it was written after *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. . . . The style of the '*Merry Pranks* is not that of a time previous to [1594, the date White assigns to cer-'tain passages in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*]. Its simplicity and directness, and 'its comparative freedom from the multitude of compound prepositions and adverbs 'which deform the sentences and obscure the thoughts of earlier writers, point to a 'period not antecedent to that of the translation of our Bible for its production. . . . 'To this evidence, afforded by the style of the narrative, the songs embodied in 'the book add some of another kind, and perhaps more generally appreciable. One, for instance, beginning, "When Virtue was a country maide," contains these 'lines:—

"She whift her pipe, she drunke her can,
The pot wos nere out of her span,
She married a tobacco man,
A stranger, a stranger."

'But tobacco had never been seen in England until 1586, only two years before the 'publication of the *Newes out of Purgatorie;* and Aubrey, writing at least after '1650, says in his Ashmolean MSS. that "within a period of thirty-five years it was '"sold for its weight in silver." But it is not necessary to go to the gossiping anti-

'quary for evidence that before 1594 or 1598 a "country maide" could not command 'the luxury of a pipe, or that rapidly as the noxious weed came into use, she could 'not then marry "a tobacco man."

'In the narrative we are told that Robin sung another of the songs "to the tune '"of *What care I how faire she be?*" But the writer of the song to which this is a 'burthen, George Wither, was not born until 1588, the very year in which the *Newes* '*out of Purgatorie* was published; and this song, although written a short time (we 'know not how long) before, was first published in 1619 in Wither's *Fidelia*. . . . As 'bearing upon the question of date, the following lines, in one of the songs, are also 'important:—

"O give the poore some bread, cheese, or butter
Bacon hempe or *flaxe*.
Some pudding bring, or other thing:
My need doth make me *aske*."

'Here the last word should plainly be, and originally was, *axe* (the early form 'of 'ask'), which is demanded by the rhyme, and which would have been given had 'the edition of 1628 been printed from one much earlier; for *axe* was in common use 'in the first years of the seventeenth century. The song, which is clearly many years 'older than the volume in which it appears, was written out for the press by some one 'who used the new orthography even at the cost of the old rhyme.' [WHITE overlooks the possibility that this change in orthography might apply to all the rest of the volume. The spelling of the ed. of 1628 might have been changed throughout from one forty years older, to make it more saleable. I am entirely of White's way of thinking, only this last argument, I am afraid, does not help him.—ED.]

'But, perhaps, the most important passage in the *Mad Pranks*, with regard to its 'relation to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is the last sentence of the First Part:— '"The second part shall shew many incredible things done by Robin Goodfellow, or '"otherwise called Hob-goblin, and his companions, by turning himself into diverse '"sundry shapes." For the evidence that Robin Goodfellow was not called Hob-'goblin until Shakespeare gave him that name, which before had pertained to another 'spirit, even if not to one of another sort, is both clear and cogent. Scot says [*vide* '*supra*] "Robin Goodfellow *and* Hobgoblin *were* as terrible," &c., and [he enumerates them in another passage, also given above, as two separate 'bugs']. This was 'in 1584, only four years before the publication of the *Newes out of Purgatorie*, 'which Collier would have refer to the *Mad Pranks* in which Robin Goodfellow and 'Hobgoblin are made one. Again, in the passage from Nashe's *Terrors of the Night*, 'published in 1594, the very year in which a part, at least, of the fairy poetry of this 'play was written, Robin Goodfellows, elves, fairies, hobgoblins are enumerated as 'distinct classes of spirits; and Spenser, just before, had distinguished the Puck from 'the Hobgoblin in his *Epithalamion*. . . . Shakespeare was the first to make Robin a 'Puck and a Hobgoblin, when he wrote: "Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet '"Puck, You do their work, and they shall have good luck," and since that the 'merry knave has borne the alias.

'We are thus led to the conclusion not only that this interesting tract, the *Mad* '*Prankes*, was written after the publication of the *Newes out of Purgatorie* in 1588, 'and after the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but that it was in a 'measure founded upon this very play. . . . It seems that the writer . . . was incited 'to his task by the popularity of this comedy, . . . and that he did his best to gather 'all the old wives' tales about Robin Goodfellow into a clumsily-designed story,

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
  At midnight I card up their wooll;
And while they sleepe, and take their ease,
  With wheel to threads their flax I pull.
    I grind at mill
    Their malt up still;
  I dress their hemp, I spin their tow,
    If any 'wake,
    And would me take,
  I wend me, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When house or harth doth sluttish lye,
  I pinch the maiden black and blue;
The bed-clothes from the bed pull I,
  And lay them naked all to view.
    'Twixt sleep and wake,
    I do them take,
  And on the key-cold floor them throw.
    If out they cry,
    Then forth I fly,
  And loudly laugh out, ho, ho, ho!

When any need to borrowe ought,
  We lend them what they do require;
And for the use demand we nought;
  Our owne is all we do desire.
    If to repay,
    They do delay,
  Abroad amongst them then I go,
    And night by night,
    I them affright
  With pinchings, dreames, and ho, ho, ho!

When lazie queans have nought to do,
  But study how to cog and lye;
To make debate and mischief too,
  'Twixt one another secretlye:
    I marke their gloze,
    And it disclose,
  To them whom they have wronged so;
    When I have done,
    I get me gone,
  And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engins set
  In loop-holes, where the vermine creepe,
Who from their folds and houses, get
  Their ducks, and geese, and lambes asleep:

Mad Robin I, at his command,
Am sent to viewe the night-sports here.
What revell rout
Is kept about,
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee,
And merry bee,
And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho!

More swift than lightening I can flye
About this aery welkin soone,
And, in a minute's space, descrye
Each thing that's done belowe the moone.
There's not a hag
Or ghost shall wag,
Cry, ware Goblins! where I go;
But Robin I
Their feates will spy,
And send them home, with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meete,
As from their night-sports they trudge home;
With counterfeiting voice I greete
And call them on, with me to roame
Thro' woods, thro' lakes,
Thro' bogs, thro' brakes;
Or else, unseene, with them I go,
All in the nicke,
To play some tricke,
And frolicke it, with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meete them like a man;
Sometimes an ox; sometimes a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can;
To trip and trot about them round.
But if, to ride,
My backe they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
Ore hedge and lands, [*qu.* launds?—ED.]
Thro' pools and ponds
I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When lads and lasses merry be,
With possets and with juncates fine;
Unseene of all the company,
I eat their cakes and sip their wine;
And, to make sport,
I [sneeze] and snort
And out the candles I do blow.
The maids I kiss;
They shrieke—Who's this?
I answer nought, but ho, ho, ho!

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
  At midnight I card up their wooll;
And while they sleepe, and take their ease,
  With wheel to threads their flax I pull.
    I grind at mill
    Their malt up still;
  I dress their hemp, I spin their tow,
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    And would me take,
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  And lay them naked all to view.
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  But study how to cog and lye;
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  'Twixt one another secretlye:
    I marke their gloze,
    And it disclose,
  To them whom they have wronged so;
    When I have done,
    I get me gone,
  And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engins set
  In loop-holes, where the vermine creepe,
Who from their folds and houses, get
  Their ducks, and geese, and lambes asleep:

I spy the gin,
And enter in,
And seeme a vermine taken so.
But when they there
Approach me neare,
I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadowes greene,
We nightly dance our hey-day guise;
And to our fairye king, and queene,
We chant our moon-light harmonies.
When larks 'gin sing,
Away we fling;
And babes new-borne steal as we go,
An elfe in bed
We leave instead,
And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!

From hag-bred Merlin's time, have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro;
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Good-fellow.
Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
Who haunt the nightes,
The hags and goblins do me know;
And beldames old
My feates have told,
So *Vale, Vale;* ho, ho, ho!

[The foregoing song, clearly *post*-Shakespearian, would not have been reprinted here had it not been repeatedly referred to by editors and commentators.

COLLIER owned a version in a MS of the time; which was 'the more curious,' says Collier (p. 185), 'because it has the initials B. J. at the end. It contains some 'variations and an additional stanza.'

In HALLIWELL'S *Fairy Mythology* (*Shakespeare Society*, 1841) many extracts from poems and dramas may be found, but as they also are all of a later date than the present play, a reference to them is sufficient.]

DURATION OF THE ACTION

HALLIWELL (*Introduction*, &c., 1841, p. 3): The period of the action is four days, concluding with the night of the new moon. But Hermia and Lysander receive the edict of Theseus four days before the new moon; they fly from Athens 'tomorrow 'night'; they become the sport of the fairies, along with Helena and Demetrius, *during one night only*, for Oberon accomplishes all in one night, before 'the first cock 'crows,' and the lovers are discovered by Theseus the morning before that which would have rendered this portion of the plot chronologically consistent.

W. A. WRIGHT (*Preface*, p. xxii): In the play itself the time is about May-day, but Shakespeare, from haste or inadvertence, has fallen into some confusion in regard to it. Theseus' opening words point to April 27, four days before the new moon which was to behold the night of his marriage with Hippolyta. . . . The next night, which would be April 28, Lysander appoints for Hermia to escape with him from Athens. . . . The night of the second day is occupied with the adventures in the wood, and in the morning the lovers are discovered by Theseus and his huntsmen, and it is supposed that they have risen early to observe the rite of May. So that the morning of the third day is the 1st of May, and the last two days of April are lost altogether. Titania's reference to the 'middle summer's spring' must therefore be to the summer of the preceding year. It is a curious fact, on which, however, I would not lay too much stress, that in 1592 there was a new moon on the 1st of May; so that if *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written so as to be acted on a May day, when the actual age of the moon corresponded with its age in the play, it must have been written for May day, 1592.

P. A. DANIEL (*Trans. New Shakspere Soc.* 1877–9, Part ii, p. 147): **Day 1.**—Act I, Sc. i. Athens. In the first two speeches the proposed duration of the action seems pretty clearly set forth. By [them] I understand that four clear days are to intervene between the time of this scene and the day of the wedding. The night of this day No. 1 would, however, suppose five *nights* to come between.

Day 2.—Act II, Act III, and part of Sc. i, Act IV, are on the morrow night in the wood, and are occupied with the adventures of the lovers; with Oberon, Titania, and Puck; the Clowns. Daybreak being at hand, the fairies trip after the nights' shade and leave the lovers and Bottom asleep.

Day 3.—Act IV, Sc. i, continued. Morning. May-day. Theseus, Hippolyta, &c. enter and awake the lovers with their hunting horns.

In Act I. it will be remembered that four days were to elapse before Theseus's nuptials and Hermia's resolve; but here we see the plot is altered, for we are now only in the second day from the opening scene, and only one clear day has intervened between day No. 1 and this, the wedding-day.

Act IV, Sc. ii. Athens. Later in the day.

Act V. In the Palace. Evening.

According to the opening speeches of Theseus and Hippolyta in Act I, we should have expected the dramatic action to have comprised five days exclusive of that Act as it is we have only three days inclusive of it.

Day 1.—Act I.

" 2.—Acts II, III, and part of Sc. i, Act IV.

" 3.—Part of Sc. i, Act IV, Sc. ii, Act IV, and Act V.

FURNIVALL (*Introd. Leopold Shakspere*, 1877, p. xxvii): Note in this *Dream* the first of those inconsistencies as to the time of the action of the play that became so markt a feature in later plays, like *The Merchant of Venice*, where three months and more are crowded into 39 hours. Here Theseus and Hippolyta say that 'four happy 'days' and 'four nights' are to pass before 'the night of our solemnities;' but, in the hurry of the action of the play, Shakspere forgets this, and makes only two nights so pass. Theseus speaks to Hippolyta, and gives judgement on Hermia's case, on April 29. 'Tomorrow night,' April 30, the lovers meet, and sleep in the forest, and are found there on May-day morning by Theseus. They and he all go to Athens and get married that day, and go to bed at midnight, the fairies stopping with them till the break of the fourth day, May 2.

FLEAY (*Robinson's Epit. of Lit.* 1 Apr. 1879): All editors and commentators, as far as I know, agree that the 'four days' of I, i cannot be reconciled with the action of the play. I demur. The marriage of Theseus is on the 1st of May; the play opens on the 27th of April, but at line 137 I take it a new scene must begin [see note *ad loc.*]; and there is no reason why it should not be on the 28th or 29th of April. I would place it on the 28th. On the 29th the lovers go to the wood, and, in IV, i, 114, when the fairies leave, it is the morning of the 30th. But at this point Titania's music has struck 'more dead than common sleep' on the lovers. Yet in a few minutes enter Theseus, the horns sound, and they awake. Why this dead sleep if it has to last but a few minutes? Surely Act III ends with the fairies' exit, and the lovers sleep through the 30th of April and wake on May morning. . . . At the end of Act III there is in the Folio a curious stage-direction, which would come in well after *Sleepers lie still*, at the division I propose: *They sleep all the Act*, i. e. while the music is playing. But if this reasoning seems insufficient, let the reader turn to IV, i, 99, where Oberon says he will be at Theseus's wedding *tomorrow* midnight. This must be said on the 30th of April. . . . There must therefore be an interval of 24 hours somewhere, and this is only possible during the dead sleep of the lovers. If any one would ask why make them sleep during this time, I would answer that the 30th of April, 1592, was a Sunday.

HENRY A. CLAPP (*Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1885): *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the only one of Shakespeare's plays in which I have discovered an inexplicable variance between the different parts of his scheme of time. . . . It is this same 'tomorrow night' which teems with wonders for all the chief persons of the piece; the whole of Acts II. and III. is included within it, and in Scene i. of Act IV. day breaks upon the following morn. . . . It is a single night, as is said over and over again by the text in diverse ways. . . . Parts of three successive days have therefore been occupied in the action, and a whole day has somehow dropped out. . . . On the whole, I think we must believe that the explanation lies in the nature of the play, whose characters, even when clothed with human flesh and blood, have little solidity or reality. I fancy that Shakespeare would smilingly plead guilty as an accessory after the fact to the blunder, and charge the principal fault upon Puck and his crew, who would doubtless rejoice in the annihilation of a mortal's day.

ENGLISH CRITICISMS

SAMUEL PEPYS, 1662, September 29:—To the King's Theatre, where we saw 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid, ridiculous play, that ever I saw in my life—(Vol. ii, p. 51, ed. Bright, ap. Ingleby).

HAZLITT (*Characters*, &c., 1817, p. 128): Puck is the leader of the fairy band. He is the Ariel of the *Midsummer Night's Dream;* and yet as unlike as can be to the Ariel in *The Tempest.* No other poet could have made two such different characters out of the same fanciful materials and situations. Ariel is a minister of retribution, who is touched with a sense of pity at the woes he inflicts. Puck is a mad-cap sprite, full of wantonness and mischief, who laughs at those whom he misleads—'Lord, what fools these mortals be!' Ariel cleaves the air, and executes his mission with the zeal of a winged messenger; Puck is borne along on his fairy errand like the light and glittering gossamer before the breeze. He is, indeed, a most Epicurean little gentleman, dealing in quaint devices, and faring in dainty delights. Prospero and his world of spirits are a set of moralists, but with Oberon and his fairies we are launched at once into the empire of the butterflies. How beautifully is this race of beings contrasted with the men and women actors in the scene, by a single epithet which Titania gives to the latter, 'the human mortals'! It is astonishing that Shakespeare should be considered, not only by foreigners but by many of our own critics, as a gloomy and heavy writer, who painted nothing but 'gorgons and 'hydras and chimeras dire.' His subtlety exceeds that of all other dramatic writers, insomuch that a celebrated person of the present day said he regarded him rather as a metaphysician than a poet. His delicacy and sportive gaiety are infinite. In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* alone we should imagine there is more sweetness and beauty of description than in the whole range of French poetry put together. What we mean is this, that we will produce out of that single play ten passages, to which we do not think any ten passages in the works of the French poets can be opposed, displaying equal fancy and imagery. Shall we mention the remonstrance of Helena to Hermia, or Titania's description of her fairy train, or her disputes with Oberon about the Indian boy, or Puck's account of himself and his employments, or the Fairy Queen's exhortation to the elves to pay due attendance upon her favorite, Bottom; or Hippolyta's description of a chase, or Theseus's answer? The two last are as heroical and spirited as the others are full of luscious tenderness. The reading of this play is like wandering in a grove by moonlight; the descriptions breathe a sweetness like odours thrown upon beds of flowers. . . . It has been suggested to us that this play would do admirably to get up as a Christmas after-piece. . . . Alas, the experiment has been tried and has failed, . . . from the nature of things. The *Midsummer Night's Dream*, when acted, is converted from a delightful fiction into a dull pantomime. All that is finest in the play is lost in the representation. The spectacle was grand; but the spirit was evaporated, the genius was fled.—Poetry and the stage do not agree well together. The attempt to reconcile them in this instance fails not only of effect, but of decorum. The *ideal* can have no place upon the stage, which is a picture without perspective; everything there is in the foreground. That which was merely an airy shape, a dream, a passing thought, immediately becomes an unmanageable reality. Where all is left to the imagination (as is the case in reading) every circumstance, near or remote, has an equal chance of being

kept in mind, and tells according to the mixed impression of all that has been suggested. But the imagination cannot sufficiently qualify the actual impressions of the senses. Any offence given to the eye is not to be got rid of by explanation. Thus, Bottom's head in the play is a fantastic illusion, produced by magic spells; on the stage it is an ass's head, and nothing more; certainly a very strange costume for a gentleman to appear in. Fancy cannot be embodied any more than a simile can be painted; and it is as idle to attempt it as to personate *Wall* or *Moonshine*. Fairies are not incredible, but fairies six feet high are so. Monsters are not shocking if they are seen at a proper distance. When ghosts appear at midday, when apparitions stalk along Cheapside, then may the *Midsummer Night's Dream* be represented without injury at Covent Garden or at Drury Lane. The boards of a theatre and the regions of fancy are not the same thing.

AUGUSTINE SKOTTOWE (*Life of Shakespeare*, &c., 1824, i, 255): Few plays consist of such incongruous materials as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It comprises no less than four histories: that of Theseus and Hippolyta; of the four Athenian lovers; the actors; and the fairies. It is not, indeed, absolutely necessary to separate Theseus and Hippolyta from the lovers, nor the actors from the fairies, but the link of connection is extremely slender. Nothing can be more irregularly wild than to bring into contact the Fairy mythology of modern Europe and the early events of Grecian history, or to introduce Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, and Starveling, 'hard-handed 'men which never laboured in their minds till now,' as amateur actors in the classic city of Athens.

Of the characters constituting the serious action of this play Theseus and Hippolyta are entirely devoid of interest. Lysander and Demetrius, and Hermia and Helena, scarcely merit notice, except on account of the frequent combination of elegance, delicacy, and vigour, in their complaints, lamentations, and pleadings, and the ingenuity displayed in the management of their cross-purposed love through three several changes. . . . Bottom and his companions are probably highly-drawn caricatures of some of the monarchs of the scene whom Shakespeare found in favour and popularity when he first appeared in London, and in the bickerings, jealousies, and contemptible conceits which he has represented we are furnished with a picture of the green-room politics of the Globe.

[P. 263.] Of all spirits it was peculiar to fairies to be actuated by the feelings and passions of mankind. The loves, jealousies, quarrels, and caprices of the dramatic king give a striking exemplification of this infirmity. Oberon is by no means backward in the assertion of supremacy over his royal consort, who, to do her justice, is as little disposed as any earthly beauty tacitly to acquiesce in the pretensions of her redoubted lord. But knowledge, we have been gravely told, is power, and the animating truth is exemplified by the issue of the contest between Oberon and Titania: his majesty's acquaintance with the secret virtues of herbs and flowers compels the wayward queen to yield what neither love nor duty could force from her. . . .

[P. 274.] An air of peculiar lightness distinguishes the poet's treatment of this extremely fanciful subject from his subsequent and bolder flights into the regions of the spiritual world. He rejected from the drama on which he engrafted it, everything calculated to detract from its playfulness or to encumber it with seriousness, and, giving the rein to the brilliancy of youthful imagination, he scattered from his superabundant wealth, the choicest flowers of fancy over the fairies' paths; his fairies move amidst the fragrance of enameled meads, graceful, lovely, and enchanting. It is

equally to Shakespeare's praise that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is not more highly distinguished by the richness and variety, than for the propriety and harmony which characterises the arrangement of the materials out of which he constructed this vivid and animated picture of fairy mythology.

THOMAS CAMPBELL (*Introductory Notice*, 1838): Addison says, 'When I look at 'the tombs of departed greatness every emotion of envy dies within me.' I have never been so sacrilegious as to envy Shakespeare, in the bad sense of the word, but if there can be such an emotion as *sinless envy*, I feel it towards him; and if I thought that the sight of his tombstone would kill so pleasant a feeling, I should keep out of the way of it. Of all his works, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* leaves the strongest impression on my mind that this miserable world must have, for once at least, contained a happy man. This play is so purely delicious, so little intermixed with the painful passions from which Poetry distils her sterner sweets, so fragrant with hilarity, so bland and yet so bold, that I cannot imagine Shakespeare's mind to have been in any other frame than that of healthful ecstasy when the sparks of inspiration thrilled through his brain in composing it. I have heard, however, an old cold critic object that Shakespeare might have foreseen it would never be a good acting play, for where could you get actors tiny enough to couch in flower blossoms? Well! I believe no manager was ever so fortunate as to get recruits from Fairy-land, and yet I am told that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was some twenty years ago revived at Covent Garden, though altered, of course, not much for the better, by Reynolds, and that it had a run of eighteen nights; a tolerably good reception. But supposing that it never could have been acted, I should only thank Shakespeare the more that he wrote here as a poet and not as a playwright. And as a birth of his imagination, whether it was to suit the stage or not, can we suppose the poet himself to have been insensible of its worth? Is a mother blind to the beauty of her own child? No! nor could Shakespeare be unconscious that posterity would dote on this, one of his loveliest children. How he must have chuckled and laughed in the act of placing the ass's head on Bottom's shoulders! He must have foretasted the mirth of generations unborn at Titania's doating on the metamorphosed weaver, and on his calling for a repast of sweet peas. His animal spirits must have bounded with the hunter's joy whilst he wrote Theseus's description of his well-tuned dogs and of the glory of the chase. He must have been as happy as Puck himself whilst he was describing the merry Fairy, and all this time he must have been self-assured that his genius '*was to cast a girdle* '*round the earth*,' and that souls, not yet in being, were to enjoy the revelry of his fancy.

But nothing can be more irregular, says a modern critic, Augustine Skottowe, than to bring into contact the fairy mythology of modern Europe and the early events of Grecian history. Now, in the plural number, Shakespeare is not amenable to this charge, for he alludes to only one event in that history, namely, to the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta; and as to the introduction of fairies, I am not aware that he makes any of the Athenian personages believe in their existence, though they are subject to their influence. Let us be candid on the subject. If there were fairies in modern Europe, which no rational believer in fairy tales will deny, why should those fine creatures not have existed previously in Greece, although the poor blind heathen Greeks, on whom the gospel of Gothic mythology had not yet dawned, had no conception of them? If Theseus and Hippolyta had talked believingly about the dapper elves, there would have been some room for critical complaint; but otherwise the

fairies have as good a right to be in Greece in the days of Theseus, as to play their pranks anywhere else or at any other time.

There are few plays, says the same critic, which consist of such incongruous materials as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It comprises four histories—that of Theseus and Hippolyta, that of the four Athenian Lovers, that of the Actors, and that of the Fairies, and the link of connection between them is exceedingly *slender*. In answer to this, I say that the plot contains nothing about any of the four parties concerned approaching to the pretension of a history. Of Theseus and Hippolyta my critic says that they are uninteresting, but when he wrote that judgement he must have fallen asleep after the hunting scene. Their felicity is seemingly secure, and it throws a tranquil assurance that all will end well. But the bond of sympathy between Theseus and his four loving subjects is anything but slender. It is, on the contrary, most natural and probable for a newly-married pair to have patronised their amorous lieges during their honeymoon. Then comes the question, What *natural* connection can a party of fairies have with human beings? This is indeed a posing interrogation, and I can only reply that fairies are an odd sort of beings, whose connection with mortals can never be set down but as supernatural.

Very soon Mr Augustine Skottowe blames Shakespeare for introducing common mechanics as amateur actors during the reign of Theseus in classic Athens. I dare say Shakespeare troubled himself little about Greek antiquities, but here the poet happens to be right and his critic to be wrong. Athens was not a classical city in the days of Theseus; and, about seven hundred years later than his reign, the players of Attica roved about in carts, besmearing their faces with the lees of wine. I have little doubt that, long after the time of Theseus, there were many prototypes of Bottom the weaver and Snug the joiner in the itinerant acting companies of Attica.

C. A. BROWN (*Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems*, 1838, p. 268): How must Spenser have been enchanted with this poetry! [i. e. the present play]. But can we believe that the multitude were enchanted? or, if they were, could poetry compensate, in their eyes, for its inapplicability for the stage? Before the invention of machinery, an audience must indeed have carried to the theatre more imagination than is requisite at the present day; yet, still I cannot but think that these ideal beings, in representation, claimed too much of so rare a quality, and that it failed at the first, as when it was last attempted in London. Hazlitt has dwelt on the unmanageable nature of this 'dream' for the stage; and was it not equally unmanageable at all times? . . .

Regarding it as certain that Shakespeare was, at one period, unsuccessful as a dramatic poet, we have the more reason to love his nature, which never led him, throughout his works, especially in the *Poems to his Friend*, where he speaks much of himself, into querulousness at the bad taste of the town, and angry invectives against actors and audiences, so common to the disappointed playwrights of his time.

COLLIER: There is every reason to believe that [this play] was popular; in 1622, the year before it was reprinted in the first folio, it is thus mentioned by Taylor, the Water-poet, in his *Sir Gregory Nonsense*:—'I say, as it is applausfully written, and 'commended to posterity, in the Midsummer Night's Dream:—if we offend, it is with 'our good will; we came with no intent but to offend, and show our simple skill.'

HALLAM (*Lit. of Europe*, 1839, ii, 387): The beautiful play of *Midsummer Night's Dream* . . . evidently belongs to the earlier period of Shakespeare's genius;

poetical as we account it, more than dramatic, yet rather so, because the indescribable profusion of imaginative poetry in this play overpowers our senses till we can hardly observe anything else, than from any deficiency of dramatic excellence. For in reality the structure of the fable, consisting as it does of three if not four actions, very distinct in their subjects and personages, yet wrought into each other without effort or confusion, displays the skill, or rather instinctive felicity, of Shakespeare, as much as in any play he has written. No preceding dramatist had attempted to fabricate a complex plot; for low comic scenes, interspersed with a serious action upon which they have no influence, do not merit notice. The *Menæchmi* of Plautus had been imitated by others, as well as by Shakespeare; but we speak here of original invention.

The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is, I believe, altogether original in one of the most beautiful conceptions that ever visited the mind of a poet, the fairy machinery. A few before him had dealt in a vulgar and clumsy manner with popular superstition; but the sportive, beneficent, invisible population of the air and earth, long since established in the creed of childhood and of those simple as children, had never for a moment been blended with 'human mortals' among the personages of the drama. . . . The language of *Midsummer Night's Dream* is equally novel with the machinery. It sparkles in perpetual brightness with all the hues of the rainbow; yet there is nothing overcharged or affectedly ornamented. Perhaps no play of Shakespeare has fewer blemishes, or is from beginning to end in so perfect keeping; none in which so few lines could be erased, or so few expressions blamed. His own peculiar idiom, the dress of his mind, which began to be discernible in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, is more frequently manifested in the present play. The expression is seldom obscure, but it is never in poetry, and hardly in prose, the expression of other dramatists, and far less of the people. And here, without reviving the debated question of Shakespeare's learning, I must venture to think that he possessed rather more acquaintance with the Latin language than many believe. The phrases, unintelligible and improper, except in the sense of their primitive roots, which occur so copiously in his plays, seem to be unaccountable on the supposition of absolute ignorance. In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* these are much less frequent than in his later dramas. But here we find several instances. Thus, 'things base and vile, 'holding no *quantity*,' for value; rivers, that 'have overborne their *continents*,' the *continente ripa* of Horace; '*compact* of imagination;' 'something of great *constancy*,' for consistency; 'sweet Pyramus *translated* there;' 'the law of Athens, which by no 'means we may *extenuate*.' I have considerable doubts whether any of these expressions would be found in the contemporary prose of Elizabeth's reign, which was less overrun by pedantry than that of her successor; but, could authority be produced for Latinisms so forced, it is still not very likely that one, who did not understand their proper meaning, would have introduced them into poetry. It would be a weak answer that we do not detect in Shakespeare any imitations of the Latin poets. His knowledge of the language may have been chiefly derived, like that of schoolboys, from the Dictionary, and insufficient for the thorough appreciation of their beauties. But, if we should believe him well acquainted with Virgil or Ovid, it would be by no means surprising that his learning does not display itself in imitation. Shakespeare seems, now and then, to have a tinge on his imagination from former passages; but he never distinctly imitates, though, as we have seen, he has sometimes adopted. The streams of invention flowed too fast from his own mind to leave him time to accommodate the words of a foreign language to our own. He knew that to create would be easier, and pleasanter, and better.

CHARLES KNIGHT (*Supplementary Notice*, 1840, p. 382): We can conceive that with scarcely what can be called a model before him, Shakespeare's early dramatic attempts must have been a series of experiments to establish a standard by which he could regulate what he addressed to a mixed audience. The plays of his middle and mature life, with scarcely an exception, are acting plays; and they are so, not from the absence of the higher poetry, but from the predominance of character and passion in association with it. But even in those plays which call for a considerable exercise of the unassisted imaginative faculty in an audience, such as *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the passions are not powerfully roused and the senses are not held enchained by the interests of the plot, he is still essentially dramatic. What has been called of late years the dramatic poem—that something between the epic and the dramatic, which is held to form an apology for whatever is episodical or incongruous the author may choose to introduce—was unattempted by him. *The Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher—a poet who knew how to accommodate himself to the taste of a mixed audience more readily than Shakespeare—was condemned on the first night of its appearance. Seward, one of his editors, calls this the scandal of our nation. And yet it is extremely difficult to understand how the event could have been otherwise; for *The Faithful Shepherdess* is essentially undramatic. Its exquisite poetry was, therefore, thrown away upon an impatient audience —its occasional indelicacy could not propitiate them. Milton's *Comus* is, in the same way, essentially undramatic; and none but such a refined audience as that at Ludlow Castle could have endured its representation. But the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is composed altogether upon a different principle. It exhibits all that congruity of parts —that natural progression of scenes—that subordination of action and character to one leading design—that ultimate harmony evolved out of seeming confusion—which constitute the dramatic spirit. With 'audience fit, though few,'—with a stage not encumbered with decorations—with actors approaching (if it were so possible) to the idea of grace and archness which belong to the fairy troop—the subtle and evanescent beauties of this drama might not be wholly lost in the representation. But under the most favourable circumstances much would be sacrified. It is in the closet that we must not only suffer our senses to be overpowered by its 'indescribable profusion of 'imaginative poetry,' but trace the instinctive felicity of Shakespeare in the 'structure 'of the fable.' If the *Midsummer Night's Dream could* be acted, there can be no doubt how well it would act. Our imagination must amend what is wanting. . . .

To offer an analysis of this subtle and ethereal drama would, we believe, be as unsatisfactory as the attempts to associate it with the realities of the stage. With scarcely an exception, the proper understanding of the other plays of Shakespeare may be assisted by connecting the apparently separate parts of the action, and by developing and reconciling what seems obscure and anomalous in the features of the characters. But to follow out the caprices and illusions of the loves of Demetrius and Lysander, of Helena and Hermia; to reduce to prosaic description the consequence of the jealousies of Oberon and Titania; to trace the Fairy Queen under the most fantastic of deceptions, . . . and, finally, to go along with the scene till the illusions disappear, . . . such an attempt as this would be worse than unreverential criticism. No,—the *Midsummer Night's Dream* must be left to its own influences.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW (April, 1848, p. 422): The play consists of several groups, which at first sight appear to belong not so much to the same landscape as to different compartments of the same canvas. Between them, however, a coherence

and connection are soon discovered, of which we have rather hints and glimpses and a general impression than full assurance. We do not say that this connection is not cheerfully admitted on all hands, but it is noticed as a kind of paradox, as though it were not the result of obedience to any discernible law. [See Knight, *supra*. —Ed.] . . .

[P. 425.] Practically, we come to the old division of the characters into three parties, the Heroes (the Lovers being included), the Fairies, and the Artizans. But of these three equivalent, incoherent elements, which is the principal? Whose action is the main action? We look for a key to the composition; on which set of figures are we to fix the eye? It is worthy of remark that ever since Shakespeare's own day some difficulty seems to have been felt, perhaps unconsciously, as to the dominant action of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. [From the appearance of the piece called *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver* and from the incident connected with the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1631 (see 'John Spencer,' *post*) the Reviewer says that] we must come to the strange conclusion that at this time the Artizans were thought to constitute the main action. . . .

[P. 426.] Let us examine the two groups, first presented to our notice. The first of these consists of the Heroes,—Theseus and his very unhistorical court. These are themselves fanciful and unsubstantial; not, indeed, creatures of the elements, yet scarcely the men and women of flesh and blood with whom Shakespeare has elsewhere peopled his living stage. We cannot but suspect there is a meaning in their mythological origin. Shakespeare has neither drawn them from history, his resource when he wished to paint the broader realities of life, nor from the lights and shadows, the gay gallantry and devoted love, of the Italian novel. They are apparently selected purely for their want of association. Their humanity is of the most delicately refined order; their perplexities the turbulence of still life. Moreover, the components of the group, the pairs of Athenian lovers, seem only to be so distributed in order to be confused. There are no distinctive features in their members. Lysander differs in nothing from Demetrius, Helena in nothing but height from Hermia. Finally, they speak a great deal of poetry, and poetry more exquisite never dropped from human pen; but it is purely objective, and not in the slightest degree modified by the character of the particular speaker. Turn we now to the second group. If the first were as far as possible removed from every-day experience, these are types of a class ever ready to our hand. They are of the earth, earthy. Bottom sat at a Stratford loom, Starveling on a Stratford tailoring-board; between them they perhaps made the doublet which captivated the eyes of Richard Hathaway's daughter, or the hose that were torn in the park of the Lucys. If the former personages were all of one coinage, the characters of the latter are stamped with curious marks of difference. The πολυπραγμοσύνη of Bottom,—he would now-a-days be a Chartist celebrity,—the discretion of Snug, the fickleness of Starveling are (as Hazlitt has shown) minutely and fancifully discriminated. And most strongly too is the homely idiomatic prose of their dialogue contrasted with the blinding brilliancy of those rhymed verses which speak the eternal language of love by the mouths of the Athenian ladies and their lovers. In short, they are the very counterpart of the former group; and it is this that we wish to establish, an intentional antagonism between the two. They seem to us, in their respective delicacy and coarseness, to mark the two extreme phases of life, the highest and the lowest, as presented to the imaginative faculty; the lowest, as it may be seen by experience,—the highest, as it may be conceived of in dreams.

We must ask our readers to notice particularly that the first act is nearly equally

divided between these two actions; one occupying the first half, the other the second. The two parties, without in the smallest degree intermingling, arrange themselves so as to admit of certain complications, the dominant feeling in the one case being refined sentiment; in the other a ridiculous ambition.

In Act II we are presented for the first time with a new creation, that of the Fairies. Henceforward, the first two actions, so remarkably separated in Act I, are gradually interwoven with the third, though nowhere with each other. In the beings of whom this third group is composed, nothing is so characteristic as the humanity of their motives and passions—humanity modified by the peculiarities of the fairy race—such as might be expected in a duodecimo edition of mankind. We find working in them splenetic jealousy, love, hatred, revenge, all the passions of men,—the littlenesses of soul brought out by each, being, as we think, designedly exaggerated. Their movements too are eminently significant of a vigorous dramatic action, the story being almost epical in form,—the tale of the *μῆνις 'Ωβερῶνος*; of which, as it gradually and uniformly advances, we are enabled to trace in the play the origin, developement, and consequences. The hypothesis, then, which we wish to put forward is, that the *fairies* are the primary conception of the piece, and their action the main action; that Shakespeare wished to represent this fanciful creation in contact with two strongly-marked extremes of human nature; the instruments by which they influence them being, aptly enough, in one case the ass's head, in the other the 'little western flower.'

It is necessary to this idea, that the two actions of the Heroes and the Artizans should be considered completely subordinate, and their separate relations among themselves as not having been created relatively to the whole piece, but principally to the intended action of the Fairies upon them. We shall then have the singular arrangement of the first Act purposely designed to exhibit successively the characteristics of the two groups in marked opposition, before exposing them to the influence of the Fairies. Finally, the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe is the ingenious machinery by which, after the stage has ceased to be occupied by the fairy action, these two otherwise independent groups are wrought together and amalgamated.

Some difficulty may yet present itself as to the form of the piece, furnished as it were with a preface and supplement; but we think this can be satisfactorily accounted for. We are not aware whether the *time* employed in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* has been generally noticed. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a dream on the night of Midsummer Day; a night sanctified to the operations of fairies, as Hallowe'en was to those of witches. The play is distributed into three distinguishable portions, those included in Act I—in Acts II, III and the first scene of Act IV—and in the last scene of Act IV together with Act V. The second, and by far the most important division, comprehends all the transactions of the Midsummer Night; its action is carefully restricted to the duration of these twelve witching hours (Oberon having, as he says, to perform all before 'the first cock crow'), while those of the first and third portions take place at distances of two days and one day respectively. Here then we have a stringent reason for Shakespeare's arrangement. He could not introduce us to the two subordinate groups, show us their isolated relations, and in the end interweave them by a consistent process, without separating them, when operating *per se*, from the main action. He could, for instance, neither account for the appearance of the lovers in the wood without a previous exposition of their difficulties, and of the agreement to fly on the 'morrow deep midnight,' nor for that of the stage-struck artizans, without some intimation of the intention to act a play, which made a rehearsal necessary. He could not follow his usual practice of developing

together the relations and position of all his characters, because the limitation to twelve hours would not admit it—and out of these twelve hours he could not remove the fairy action. So that the first and last sections of the drama, in which the main action does not proceed and only the subordinate groups appear, have nothing to do with the Midsummer Night's Dream, but are merely exegetical of it.

There are some minor indications of the truth of our theory. The very title, for instance, solely applicable as it is to that part of the drama in which the fairies appear, seems not a little significant. . . . Nor is the distribution of blank and rhymed verse unobservable. . . . We have occasionally fancied that, where the objectively poetical element prevails, the dialogue is mostly written in rhyme; where the dramatic, in the ordinary blank verse of Shakespeare. Both Heroes and Fairies speak in blank and rhymed verse, but not indifferently. The relations of the subordinate group are generally, though not invariably, conveyed through the imaginative rhymed lines, while the Fairies—the *dramatic* personages—rarely quit the vigorous versification we are so well accustomed to.

We are desirous that the Fairies should assume in this play a position commensurate with the influence they must always exercise over English literature. Great as is the direct importance of combined purity and beauty in a national mythology, the indirect value is even greater. We have escaped much, as well as gained much, if our imagination has conversed with a more delicate creation than the sensuous divinities of Greece, or the vulgar spectres of the Walpurgis-Nacht. But whether the *entente cordiale* between England and Fairy-land be for good or for evil, we must at any rate acknowledge that the connection virtually began on that very Midsummer Night which witnessed the quarrel between Oberon and Titania.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE (*Essays*, &c., 1851, ii, 138): I know not any play of Shakespeare's in which the language is so uniformly unexceptionable as this. It is all poetry, and sweeter poetry was never written. One defect there may be. Perhaps the distress of Hermia and Helena, arising from Puck's blundering application of Love-in-Idleness, is too serious, too real for so fantastic a source. Yet their altercation is so very, very beautiful, so girlish, so loveable that one cannot wish it away. The characters might be arranged by a chromatic scale, gradually shading from the thick-skinned Bottom and the rude mechanicals, the absolute old father, the proud and princely Theseus and his warrior bride, to the lusty, high-hearted wooers, and so to the sylph-like maidens, till the line melts away in Titania and her fairy train, who seem as they were made of the moonshine wherein they gambol.

CHARLES COWDEN-CLARKE (*Shakespeare Characters*, 1863, p. 97): What a rich set of fellows those 'mechanicals' are! and how individual are their several characteristics! Bully Bottom, the epitome of all the conceited donkeys that ever strutted or straddled on this stage of the world. In his own imagination equal to the performance of anything separately, and of all things collectively; the meddler, the director, the dictator. He is for dictating every movement, and directing everybody, —when he is not helping himself. He is a choice arabesque impersonation of that colouring of conceit, which by the half-malice of the world has been said to tinge the disposition of actors as invariably as the rouge does their cheeks. . . .

The character of Bottom is well worthy of a close analysis, to notice in how extraordinary a manner Shakespeare has carried out all the concurring qualities to compound a thoroughly conceited man. Conceited people, moreover, being upon such

amiable terms with themselves, are ordinarily good-natured, if not good-tempered. And so with Bottom; whether he carry an amendment or not, with his companions he is always placable; and if foiled, away he starts for some other point,—nothing disturbs his equanimity. His temper and self-possession never desert him. . . . Combined with his amusing and harmless quality of conceit, the worthy Bottom displays no inconsiderable store of imagination in his intercourse with the little people of the fairy world. How pleasantly he falls in with their several natures and qualities; dismissing them one by one with a gracious speech, like a prince at his levee. . . .

Then there is Snug, the joiner, who can board and lodge only one idea at a time, and that tardily. . . . To him succeeds Starveling, the tailor, a melancholy man, and who questions the feasibility and the propriety of everything proposed.

If, as some writers have asserted, Shakespeare was a profound practical metaphysician, it is scarcely too much to conclude that all this dovetailing of contingencies, requisite to perfectionate these several characters, was all foreseen and provided in his mind, and not the result of mere accident. By an intuitive power, that always confounds us when we examine its effects, I believe that whenever Shakespeare adopted any distinctive class of character, his 'mind's eye' took in at a glance all the concomitant minutiæ of features requisite to complete its characteristic identity. 'As from a watch-tower' he comprehended the whole course of human action,—its springs, its motives, its consequences; and he has laid down for us a trigonometrical chart of it. I believe that he did nothing without anxious premeditation; and that they who really study,—not simply read him,—must come to the same conclusion. Not only was he not satisfied with preserving the integrity of his characters while they were in speech and action before the audience; but we constantly find them carrying on their peculiarities,—*out* of the scene,—by hints of action, and casual remarks from others. Was there no design in all this? no contrivance? no foregone conclusion? nay, does it not manifest consummate intellectual power, with a sleepless assiduity? . . .

As Ariel is the etherialised impersonation of swift obedience, with an attachment perfectly feminine in its character—Puck, Robin Goodfellow, is an abstraction of all the 'quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,' of all the tricks and practical jokes in vogue among 'human mortals.' Puck is the patron saint of 'skylarking.' . . . The echo of his laugh has reverberated from age to age, striking the promontories and headlands of eternal poetry; and to those whose spirits are finely touched, it is still heard through the mist of temporal cares and toils,—dimly heard, and at fitful intervals; for the old faith is that fairy presence has ceased for ever, and exists only in the record of those other elegant fancies that were the offspring of the young world of imagination.

General E. A. HITCHCOCK (*Remarks on the Sonnets of Shakespeare. Showing that they belong to the Hermetic Class of Writings, &c*, New York, 1866, p. 95): Here are three, the spirit in man, the dull substance of the flesh, and the over-soul, 'and these three are conceived as one,' but with a disturbing sense of the body interposed, as it were, between the two spirits, where it stands like a *wall* of separation, the wall being now conceived of as the man, and then as the vestment of the universe itself—which, we read, is to be rolled up like a scroll, etc., when God shall be all in all. This consummation does not appear in the *Sonnets* themselves, though, as a doctrine, it is everywhere implied by the Poet's deep sense of the unity. It is mystically shown, however, in the ancient fable of Pyramus and Thisbe, as the reader is

expected to see by the manner in which the poet uses that fable in the Interlude introduced in the closing Act of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It may not be amiss to remind the reader of the dramas that it was usual with our poet to express the most profound truths through dramatic characters, and yet partially screen them from common inspection by the circumstances, or the sort of character made the vehicle of them,—such as Jaques and others. The reader need not be surprised, therefore, to find the *dramatis personæ* of the 'merry and tragical' Interlude to be boorish and idiotic, while it is worth remarking that even the *wall*, as also the other parts, are all represented by men, unconscious of their calling. We now turn to the drama, and remark, that it was designed by the poet that a secret meaning should be inferred by the reader. This appears from several decisive passages, besides the general inference to be drawn from the fact, that the Interlude, more than all the rest of the play, if taken literally, is what Hippolyta says of it—the silliest stuff that was ever seen. No reasonable man can imagine that the author of so many beauties as are seen in this drama could have introduced the absurd nonsense of the Interlude without having in his mind a secret purpose, which is to be divined by the aid of the reader's imagination—according to the answer of Theseus to the remark of Hippolyta, just recited. But the imagination must be here understood as a poetic creative gift or endowment, and not limited to mere 'fancy's images;' for Hippolyta herself, though here speaking of the play, gives us a clue to something deeper than what appears on the surface. She, in allusion to all the marvels the bridal party had just heard, observes, 'But all the story of the *night* told over, And all their minds transfigured 'so together, *More witnesseth than fancy's images, And grows to something of great* '*constancy*.' This is plainly a hint that these 'fables and fairy toys,' as Theseus calls them, may be the vehicle of some *constant* truth or principle. Again:—'Gentles, 'perchance you wonder at this show; But wonder on, till truth makes all things 'plain.' That is, when the truth, signified in the 'show' becomes manifest, all wonder will cease, for the object of its introduction will be understood. . . . We consider now, that we have no need to dwell upon the points in detail suggested by the closing Act of the drama, which contains the doctrine we have set out as mystically contained in the Sonnets. The curious reader, who desires to exercise his own thought, while following that of the poet, expressed through the imprisoning forms of language, will see, with the indications we have given, the purpose of the 'mirthful tragedy' of Pyramus and Thisbe. He will see the signification of the two characters or principles, figured in Pyramus and Thisbe, with the *wall*, 'the vile wall which did the 'lovers sunder.' Through this *wall* (the dull substance of the flesh), the lovers may indeed communicate, but only by a 'whisper, very secretly;' because the intercourse of spirit with spirit is a secret act of the soul in a sense of its unity with the spirit. The student will readily catch the meaning of the 'moon-shine,' or *nature*-light, in this representation, the moon being always taken as nature in all mystic writings. He will see the symbolism of the 'dog'—the *watch*-dog, of course,—representing the moral guard in a nature-life; as also the bush of *thorns*, ever ready to illustrate the doctrine that the way of the transgressor is hard. The student will notice the hint that the lovers meet by moonlight and at a tomb—a symbolic indication of the greatest mystery in life (to be found in death); and he will understand the office of the lion, which tears, not Thisbe herself, but only her 'mantle,' or what the poet calls the 'extern' of life; and finally will observe that the two principles both disappear; for the unity cannot become mystically visible, until the two principles are mystically lost sight of. It should not escape notice that the two principles are co-equal; that

a mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better'—simply figured as man and woman. The student of *Midsummer Night's Dream* may observe two very marked features in the play: one where the 'juice,' which induces so many absurdities, cross-purposes, and monstrosities, is described as the juice of (a certain flower called love-in-) *idleness:* the other where we see that all of the irregularities resulting from idleness are cured by the simple anointment of the eyes by what is called 'Dian's bud,'—which has such 'force and blessed power' as to bring all of the faculties back to nature and truth,—of which Dian is one of the accepted figures in all mystic writings. The readers of this play, who look upon these indications as purely arbitrary and without distinct meaning, may, indeed, perceive some of the scattered beauties of this *fairy* drama, but must certainly miss its true import.

A. C. SWINBURNE ('The Three Stages of Shakespeare,' *The Fortnightly Rev.*, Jan. 1876): But in the final poem which concludes and crowns the first epoch of Shakespeare's work, the special graces and peculiar glories of each that went before are gathered together as in one garland 'of every hue and every scent.' The young genius of the master of all poets finds its consummation in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The blank verse is as full, sweet, and strong as the best of Biron's or Romeo's; the rhymed verse as clear, pure, and true as the simplest and truest melody of *Venus and Adonis* or the *Comedy of Errors*. But here each kind of excellence is equal throughout; there are here no purple patches on a gown of serge, but one seamless and imperial robe of a single dye. Of the lyric and prosaic part, the counterchange of loves and laughters, of fancy fine as air and imagination high as heaven, what need can there be for any one to shame himself by the helpless attempt to say some word not utterly unworthy? Let it suffice to accept this poem as a landmark of our first stage, and pause to look back from it on what lies behind us of partial or of perfect work.

F. J. FURNIVALL (*Introd. to Leopold Shakespeare*, 1877, p. xxvi): Here at length we have Shakspere's genius in the full glow of fancy and delightful fun. The play is an enormous advance on what has gone before. But it is a poem, a dream, rather than a play; its freakish fancy of fairy-land fitting it for the choicest chamber of the student's brain, while its second part, the broadest farce, is just the thing for the public stage. E. A. Poe writes: 'When I am asked for a definition of poetry, I think of 'Titania and Oberon of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.' And certainly anything must be possible to the man who could in one work range from the height of Titania to the depth of Bottom. The links with the *Errors* are, that all the wood scenes are a comedy of errors, with three sets of people, as in the *Errors* (and four in *Love's Labour's Lost*). Then we have the vixen Hermia to match the shrewish Adriana, the quarrel with husband and wife, and Titania's 'these are the forgeries of jealousy' to compare with Adriana's jealousy in the *Errors*. Adriana offers herself to Antipholus of Syracuse, but he refuses her for her sister Luciana, as Helena offers herself to Demetrius, and he refuses her for her friend Hermia. Hermia bids Demetrius love Helena, as Luciana bids Antipholus of Syracuse love his supposed wife Adriana. In the background of the *Errors* we have the father Ægeon with the sentence of death or fine pronounced by Duke Solinus. In the *Dream* we have in the background the father Egeus with the sentence of death or celibacy on Hermia pronounced by Duke Theseus. In both plays the scene is Eastern; in the *Errors*, Ephe-

sus; and in the *Dream*, Athens. We have an interesting connection with Chaucer, in that the Theseus and Hippolyta are taken from his *Knight's Tale*, and used again in *The Two Noble Kinsmen;* also the May-day and St. Valentine, and the wood birds here may be from Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules*. The fairies, too, are in Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's Tale*. As links with *Love's Labour's Lost* we notice the comedy of errors in the earlier play, the forest scene, and the rough country sub-play, while as opposed to the *Love's Labour's Lost*'s 'Jack hath not Gill,' the fairies tell us here 'Jack shall have Gill.' The fairies are the centre of the drama; the human characters are just the sport of their whims and fancies, a fact which is much altered when we come to Shakspere's use of fairy-land again in his *Tempest*, where the aërial beings are but ministers of the wise man's rule for the highest purposes. The finest character here is undoubtedly Theseus. In his noble words about the countrymen's play, the true gentleman is shown. His wife's character is but poor beside his. Though the story is Greek, yet the play is full of English life. It is Stratford which has given Shakspere the picture of the sweet country school-girls working at one flower, warbling one song, growing together like a double cherry, seeming parted, but yet a union in partition. It is Stratford that has given him the picture of the hounds with 'Ears that sweep away the morning dew.' It is Stratford that has given him his out-door woodland life, his clowns' play, and the clowns themselves, Bottom, with his inimitable conceit, and his fellows, Snug and Quince, &c. It is Stratford that has given him all Puck's fairy-lore, the cowslips tall, the red-hipt bumble bee, Oberon's bank, the pansy love-in-idleness, and all the lovely imagery of the play. But wonderful as the mixture of delicate and aërial fancy with the coarsest and broadest comedy is, clearly as it evidences the coming of a new being on this earth to whom anything is possible, it is yet clear that the play is quite young. The undignified quarreling of the ladies, Hermia with her 'painted May-pole,' her threat to scratch Helena's eyes,—Helena with her retorts 'She was a vixen when she went to school,' &c., the comical comparison of the moon tumbling through the earth (III, ii, 52) incongruously put into an accusation of murder, the descent to bathos in Shakspere's passage about his own art, from 'the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling' to 'how easy 'is a bush supposed a bear,' would have been impossible to Shakspere in his later developement. Those who contend for the later date of the play, from the beauty of most of the fancy, and the allusion to the effects of the rains and the floods, which they make those of 1594, must allow, I think, that the framework of the play is considerably before the date of *King John* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Possibly two dates may be allowed for the play, tho' I don't think them needful. . . .

With the *Dream* I propose to close the first Group of Shakspere's Comedies, those in which the Errors arising from mistaken identity make so much of the fun. And the name of the group may well be 'the Comedy of Errors or Mistaken-Identity Group.'

HUDSON (*Introduction*, 1880, p. 7): The whole play is indeed a sort of ideal dream; and it is from the fairy personages that its character as such mainly proceeds. All the materials of the piece are ordered and assimilated to that central and governing idea. This it is that explains and justifies the distinctive features of the work, such as the constant preponderance of the lyrical over the dramatic, and the free playing of the action unchecked by the conditions of outward fact and reality. Accordingly a sort of lawlessness is, as it ought to be, the very law of the performance. . . . In keeping with this central dream-idea, the actual order of things everywhere gives place to the spontaneous issues and capricious turnings of the dreaming

mind; the lofty and the low, the beautiful and the grotesque, the world of fancy and of fact, all the strange diversities that enter into 'such stuff as dreams are made of,' running and frisking together, and interchanging their functions and properties; so that the whole seems confused, flitting, shadowy, and indistinct, as fading away in the remoteness and fascination of moonlight. The very scene is laid in a veritable dream-land, called Athens indeed, but only because Athens was the greatest bee-hive of beautiful visions then known; or rather it is laid in an ideal forest near an ideal Athens,—a forest peopled with sportive elves and sprites and fairies feeding on moonlight and music and fragrance; a place where Nature herself is preternatural; where everything is idealised even to the sunbeams and the soil; where the vegetation proceeds by enchantment, and there is magic in the germination of the seed and secretion of the sap. . . .

[Page 9.] In further explication of this peculiar people [the Fairies], it is to be noted that there is nothing of reflection or conscience or even of a spiritualised intelligence in their proper life; they have all the attributes of the merely natural and sensitive soul, but no attributes of the properly rational and moral soul. They worship the clean, the neat, the pretty, the pleasant, whatever goes to make up the idea of purely sensuous beauty; this is a sort of religion with them; whatever of conscience they have adheres to this; so that herein they not unfitly represent the wholesome old notion which places cleanliness next to godliness. Everything that is trim, dainty, elegant, graceful, agreeable, and sweet to the senses, they delight in; flowers, fragrances, dewdrops, and moonbeams, honey-bees, butterflies, and nightingales, dancing, play, and song,—these are their joy; out of these they weave their highest delectation; amid these they 'fleet the time carelessly,' without memory or forecast and with no thought or aim beyond the passing pleasure of the moment. On the other hand, they have an instinctive repugnance to whatever is foul, ugly, sluttish, awkward, ungainly, or misshapen; they wage unrelenting war against bats, spiders, hedgehogs, spotted snakes, blindworms, long-legg'd spinners, beetles, and all such disagreeable creatures; to 'kill cankers in the musk-rosebuds' and to 'keep back the 'clamorous owl,' are regular parts of their business. . . . Thus these beings embody the ideal of the mere natural soul, or rather the purely sensuous fancy which shapes and governs the pleasing or the vexing delusions of sleep. They lead a merry, luxurious life, given up entirely to the pleasures of happy sensation,—a happiness that has no moral element, nothing of reason or conscience in it. They are indeed a sort of personified dreams; and so the Poet places them in a kindly or at least harmless relation to mortals as the bringers of dreams. Their very kingdom is located in the aromatic, flower-scented Indies, a land where mortals are supposed to live in a half-dreamy state. From thence they come, 'following darkness,' just as dreams naturally do; or, as Oberon words it, 'tripping after the night's shade, swifter than the wander-'ing Moon.' It is their nature to shun the daylight, though they do not fear it, and to prefer the dark, as this is their appropriate worktime; but most of all they love the dusk and twilight, because this is the best dreaming-time, whether the dreamer be asleep or awake. And all the shifting phantom-jugglery of dreams, all the sweet soothing witcheries, and all the teasing and tantalising imagery of dream-land, rightly belong to their province.

[P. 15.] Any very firm or strong delineation of character, any deep passion, earnest purpose, or working of powerful motives, would clearly go at odds with the spirit of such a performance as [the present play]. It has room but for love and beauty and delight, for whatever is most poetical in nature and fancy, and for such

tranquil stirrings of thought and feeling as may flow out in musical expression. Any such tuggings of mind or heart as would ruffle and discompose the smoothness of lyrical division would be quite out of keeping in a course of dream-life. The characters here, accordingly, are drawn with light, delicate, vanishing touches; some of them being dreamy and sentimental, some gay and frolicsome, and others replete with amusing absurdities, while all are alike dipped in fancy or sprinkled with humour. And for the same reason the tender distresses of unrequited or forsaken love here touch not our moral sense at all, but only at the most our human sympathies; love itself being represented as but the effect of some visual enchantment, which the King of Fairydom can inspire, suspend, or reverse at pleasure. Even the heroic personages are fitly shown in an unheroic aspect; we see them but in their unbendings, when they have daffed their martial robes aside, to lead the train of day-dreamers, and have a nuptial jubilee. In their case, great care and art were required to make the play what it has been blamed for being; that is, to keep the dramatic sufficiently under, and lest the law of a part should override the law of the whole.

So, likewise, in the transformation of Bottom and the dotage of Titania, all the resources of fancy were needed to prevent the unpoetical from getting the upper hand, and thus swamping the genius of the piece. As it is, what words can fitly express the effect with which the extremes of the grotesque and the beautiful are here brought together? What an inward quiet laughter springs up and lubricates the fancy at Bottom's droll confusion of his two natures, when he talks now as an ass, now as a man, and anon as a mixture of both; his thoughts running at the same time on honey-bags and thistles, the charms of music and of good dry oats! Who but Shakespeare or Nature could have so interfused the lyrical spirit, not only with, but into and through, a series or cluster of the most irregular and fantastic drolleries? But, indeed, this embracing and kissing of the most ludicrous and the most poetical, the enchantment under which they meet, and the airy, dream-like grace that hovers over their union, are altogether inimitable and indescribable. In this singular wedlock the very diversity of the elements seems to link them the closer, while this linking in turn heightens that diversity; Titania being thereby drawn on to finer issues of soul, and Bottom to larger expressions of stomach. The union is so very improbable as to seem quite natural; we cannot conceive how anything but a dream could possibly have married things so contrary; and that they could not have come together save in a dream, is a sort of proof that they *were* dreamed together.

And so throughout, the execution is in strict accordance with the plan. The play from beginning to end is a perfect festival of whatever dainties and delicacies poetry may command,—a continued revelry and jollification of soul, where the understanding is lulled asleep, that the fancy may run riot in unrestrained enjoyment. The bringing together of four parts so dissimilar as those of the Duke and his warrior Bride, of the Athenian ladies and their lovers, of the amateur players and their woodland rehearsal, and of the fairy bickerings and overreaching; and the carrying of them severally to a point where they all meet and blend in lyrical respondence; all this is done in the same freedom from the laws that govern the drama of character and life. Each group of persons is made to parody itself into concert with the others; while the frequent intershootings of fairy influence lift the whole into the softest regions of fancy. At last the Interlude comes in as an amusing burlesque on all that has gone before; as in our troubled dreams we sometimes end with a dream that we have been dreaming, and our perturbations sink to rest in the sweet assurance that they were but the phantoms and unrealities of a busy sleep. . . .

[Page 21.] Partly for reasons already stated, and partly for others that I scarce know how to state, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a most effectual poser to criticism. Besides that its very essence is irregularity, so that it cannot be fairly brought to the test of rules, the play forms properly a class by itself; literature has nothing else really like it; nothing therefore with which it may be compared, and its merits adjusted. For so the Poet has here exercised powers apparently differing even in kind, not only from those of any other writer, but from those displayed in any other of his own writings. Elsewhere, if his characters are penetrated with the ideal, their whereabout lies in the actual, and the work may in some measure be judged by that life which it claims to represent; here the whereabout is as ideal as the characters; all is in the land of dreams,—a place for dreamers, not for critics. For who can tell what a dream ought or ought not to be, or when the natural conditions of dream-life are or are not rightly observed? How can the laws of time and space, as involved in the transpiration of human character,—how can these be applied in a place where the mind is thus absolved from their proper jurisdiction? Besides, the whole thing swarms with enchantment; all the sweet witchery of Shakespeare's sweet genius is concentrated in it, yet disposed with so subtle and cunning a hand, that we can as little grasp it as get away from it; its charms, like those of a summer evening, are such as we may see and feel, but cannot locate or define; cannot say they are here or they are there; the moment we yield ourselves up to them, they seem to be everywhere; the moment we go to master them, they seem to be nowhere.

WILLIAM WINTER (Augustin Daly's *Arrangement for Representation*, 1888; *Preface*, p. 12): The student of [this play] as often as he thinks upon this lofty and lovely expression of a most luxuriant and happy poetic fancy, must necessarily find himself impressed with its exquisite purity of spirit, its affluence of invention, its extraordinary wealth of contrasted characters, its absolute symmetry of form, and its great beauty of poetic diction. The essential, wholesome cleanliness and sweetness of Shakespeare's mind, unaffected by the gross animalism of his times, appear conspicuously in this play. No single trait of the piece impresses the reader more agreeably than its frank display of the spontaneous, natural, and entirely delightful exultation of Theseus and Hippolyta in their approaching nuptials. They are grand creatures both, and they rejoice in each other and in their perfectly accordant love. Nowhere in Shakespeare is there a more imperial man than Theseus; nor, despite her feminine impatience of dulness, a woman more beautiful and more essentially woman-like than Hippolyta. It is thought that the immediate impulse of this comedy, in Shakespeare's mind, was the marriage of his friend and benefactor, the Earl of Southampton, with Elizabeth Vernon. . . . In old English literature it is seen that such a theme often proved suggestive of ribaldry; but Shakespeare could preserve the sanctity, even while he revelled in the passionate ardor, of love, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, while it possesses all the rosy glow, the physical thrill, and the melting tenderness of such pieces as Herrick's *Nuptial Song*, is likewise fraught with all the moral elevation and unaffected chastity of such pieces as Milton's *Comus*. The atmosphere is free and bracing; the tone honest; the note true. Then, likewise, the fertility and felicity of the poet's invention,—intertwining the loves of earthly sovereigns and of their subjects with the dissensions of fairy monarchs, the pranks of mischievous elves, the protective care of attendant sprites, and the comic but kind-hearted and well-meant fealty of boorish peasants,—arouse lively interest and keep it steadily alert. In no other of his works has Shakespeare more brilliantly shown that

complete dominance of theme which is manifested in the perfect preservation of proportion. The strands of action are braided with astonishing grace. The fourfold story is never allowed to lapse into dulness or obscurity. There is caprice, but no distortion. The supernatural machinery is never wrested toward the production of startling or monstrous effects, but it deftly impels each mortal personage in the natural line of human development. The dream-spirit is maintained throughout, and perhaps it is for this reason,—that the poet was living and thinking and writing in the free, untrammelled world of his own spacious and airy imagination, and not in any definite sphere of this earth,—that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is so radically superior to the other comedies written by him at about this period.

[P. 14.] With reference to the question of suitable method in the acting of [this play], it may be observed that too much stress can scarcely be laid upon the fact that this comedy was conceived and written absolutely in the spirit of a dream. It ought not, therefore, to be treated as a rational manifestation of orderly design. It possesses, indeed, a coherent and symmetrical plot and a definite purpose; but, while it moves toward a final result of absolute order, it presupposes intermediary progress through a realm of motley shapes and fantastic vision. Its persons are creatures of fancy, and all effort to make them solidly actual, to set them firmly upon the earth, and to accept them as realities of common life, is labour ill-bestowed. . . .

To body forth the forms of things is, in this case, manifestly, a difficult task; and yet the true course is obvious. Actors who yield themselves to the spirit of whim, and drift along with it, using a delicate method and avoiding insistence upon prosy realism, will succeed with this piece,—provided, also, that their audience can be fanciful, and can accept the performance, not as a comedy of ordinary life, but as a vision seen in a dream. The play is full of intimations that this was Shakespeare's mood.

[In *Noctes Shaksperianæ*, a collection of *Papers* by the *Winchester College Shakspere Society* (London, 1887), is to be found, on p. 208, a paper by O. T. PERKINS, 'Ghostland and Fairyland.' It is too long for insertion here, and extracts would but mangle it. It is to be commended to all to whom the charm of Shakespeare's fairies is ever fresh, and to whom, with the author, there comes no doubt that 'as Shakespeare wrote he felt the breath of the Warwickshire lanes, and heard the babble of its clear streams, and remembered the country he had known as a boy.'—ED.]

BOTTOM

HAZLITT (*Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, 1817, p. 126): Bottom the Weaver is a character that has not had justice done him. He is the most romantic of mechanics. . . . It has been observed that Shakespeare's characters are constructed upon deep physiological principles; and there is something in this play which looks very like it. Bottom follows a sedentary trade, and he is accordingly represented as conceited, serious, and fantastical. He is ready to undertake anything and everything, as if it was as much a matter of course as the motion of his loom and shuttle. He is for playing the tyrant, the lover, the lady, the lion. Snug the Joiner is the moral man of the piece, who proceeds by measurement and discretion in all things. You see him with his rule and compasses in his hand. Starveling the Tailor keeps the peace, and objects to the lion and the drawn sword. Starveling does not start the objections himself, but seconds them when made by others, as if he had not spirit to

express his fears without encouragement. It is too much to suppose all this intentional; but it very luckily falls out so. Nature includes all that is implied in the most subtle analytical distinctions; and the same distinctions will be found in Shakespeare. Bottom, who is not only chief actor, but stage-manager, for the occasion, has a device to obviate the danger of frightening the ladies, . . . and seems to have understood the subject of dramatic illusion at least as well as any modern essayist. If our holiday mechanic rules the roast among his fellows, he is no less at home in his new character of an ass. He instinctively acquires a most learned taste and grows fastidious in the choice of dried peas and bottled hay.

MAGINN (*Shakespeare Papers*, 1860, p. 121): One part of Bottom's character is easily understood, and is often well acted. Among his own companions he is the cock of the walk. His genius is admitted without hesitation. When he is lost in the wood, Quince gives up the play as marred. . . . Flute declares that he has the best wit of any handicraftman in the city. . . . It is no wonder that this perpetual flattery fills him with a most inordinate opinion of his own powers. There is not a part in the play which he cannot perform. . . . The wit of the courtiers, or the presence of the Duke, has no effect upon his nerves. He alone speaks to the audience in his own character, not for a moment sinking the personal consequence of Bottom in the assumed part of Pyramus. He sets Theseus right on a point of the play with cool importance; and replies to a jest of Demetrius (which he does not understand) with the self-command of ignorant indifference. We may be sure that he was abundantly contented with his appearance, and retired to drink in, with ear well deserving of the promotion it had attained under the patronage of Robin Goodfellow, the applause of his companions. It is true that Oberon designates him as a 'hateful fool'; that Puck stigmatises him as the greatest blockhead of the set; that the audience of wits and courtiers before whom he has performed vote him to be an ass; but what matter is that? He mixes not with them; he hears not their sarcasms; he could not understand their criticisms; and, in the congenial company of the crew of patches and base mechanicals who admire him, lives happy in the fame of being *the* Nicholas Bottom, who, by consent, to him universal and world-encompassing, is voted to be *the* Pyramus,—*the* prop of the stage,—*the* sole support of the drama.

Self-conceit, as great and undisguised as that of poor Bottom, is to be found in all classes and in all circles, and is especially pardonable in what it is considered genteel or learned to call 'the histrionic profession.' The triumphs of the player are evanescent. In no other department of intellect, real or simulated, does the applause bestowed upon the living artist bear so melancholy a disproportion to the repute awaiting him after the generation passes which has witnessed his exertions. According to the poet himself, the poor player 'Struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And 'then is heard no more.' Shakespeare's own rank as a performer was not high, and his reflections on the business of an actor are in general splenetic and discontented. He might have said,—though indeed it would not have fitted with the mood of mind of the despairing tyrant into whose mouth the reflection is put,—that the well-graced actor, who leaves the scene not merely after strutting and fretting, but after exhibiting power and genius to the utmost degree at which his art can aim, amid the thundering applause,—or, what is a deeper tribute, the breathless silence of excited and agitated thousands,—is destined ere long to an oblivion as undisturbed as that of his humbler fellow-artist, whose prattle is voted, without contradiction, to be tedious. Kemble is fading fast from our view. The gossip connected with everything about

Johnson keeps Garrick before us, but the interest concerning him daily becomes less and less. Of Betterton, Booth, Quin, we remember little more than the names. The Lowins and Burbadges of the days of Shakespeare are known only to the dramatic antiquary, or the poring commentator, anxious to preserve every scrap of information that may bear upon the elucidation of a text, or aid towards the history of the author. With the sense of this transitory fame before them, it is only natural that players should grasp at as much as comes within their reach while they have the power of doing so. . . . Pardon therefore the wearers of the sock and buskin for being obnoxious to such criticism as that lavished by Quince on Bottom. . . . It would take a long essay on the mixture of legends derived from all ages and countries to account for the production of such a personage as the 'Duke ycleped Theseus' and his following; and the fairy mythology of the most authentic superstitions would be ransacked in vain to discover exact authorities for the Shakespearian Oberon and Titania. But no matter whence derived, the author knew well that in his hands the chivalrous and classical, the airy and the imaginative, were safe. It was necessary for his drama to introduce among his fairy party a creature of earth's mould, and he has so done it as in the midst of his mirth to convey a picturesque satire on the fortune which governs the world, and upon those passions which elsewhere he had with agitating pathos to depict. As Romeo, the gentleman, is *the* unlucky man of Shakespeare, so here does he exhibit Bottom, the blockhead, as *the* lucky man, as him on whom Fortune showers her favours beyond measure. This is the part of the character which cannot be performed. It is here that the greatest talent of the actor must fail in answering the demand made by the author upon our imagination. . . . The mermaid chanting on the back of her dolphin; the fair vestal throned in the west; the bank blowing with wild thyme, and decked with oxlip and nodding violet; the roundelay of the fairies singing their queen to sleep; and a hundred images beside of aërial grace and mythic beauty, are showered upon us; and in the midst of these splendours is tumbled in Bottom the weaver, blockhead by original formation, and rendered doubly ridiculous by his partial change into a literal jackass. He, the most unfitted for the scene of all conceivable personages, makes his appearance, not as one to be expelled with loathing and derision, but to be instantly accepted as the chosen lover of the Queen of the Fairies. The gallant train of Theseus traverse the forest, but they are not the objects of such fortune. The lady, under the oppression of the glamour cast upon her eyes by the juice of love-in-idleness, reserves her rapture for an absurd clown. Such are the tricks of Fortune. . . . Abstracting the poetry, we see the same thing every day in the plain prose of the world. Many is the Titania driven by some unintelligible magic so to waste her love. Some juice, potent as that of Puck,—the true Cupid of such errant passions,—often converts in the eyes of woman the grossest defects into resistless charms. The lady of youth and beauty will pass by attractions best calculated to captivate the opposite sex, to fling herself at the feet of age or ugliness. Another, decked with graces, accomplishments, and the gifts of genius, and full of all the sensibilities of refinement, will squander her affections on some good-for-nothing *roué*, whose degraded habits and pursuits banish him far away from the polished scenes which she adorns. The lady of sixteen quarters will languish for him who has no arms but those which nature has bestowed; from the midst of the gilded *salon* a soft sigh may be directed towards the thin-clad tenant of a garret; and the heiress of millions may wish them sunken in the sea if they form a barrier between her and the penniless lad toiling for his livelihood, 'Lord of his presence, and no 'land beside.' . . . Ill-mated loves are generally of short duration on the side of the

nobler party, and she awakes to lament her folly. The fate of those who suffer like Titania is the hardest. . . . Woe to the unhappy lady who is obliged to confess, when the enchantment has passed by, that she was 'enamoured of an *ass!*' She must indeed 'loathe his visage,' and the memory of all connected with him is destined ever to be attended by a strong sensation of disgust.

But the ass himself of whom she was enamoured has not been the less a favourite of Fortune, less happy and self-complacent, because of her late repentance. He proceeds onward as luckily as ever. Bottom, during the time that he attracts the attentions of Titania, never for a moment thinks there is anything extraordinary in the matter. He takes the love of the Queen of the Fairies as a thing of course, orders about her tiny attendants as if they were so many apprentices at his loom, and dwells in Fairy Land, unobservant of its wonders, as quietly as if he were still in his workshop. Great is the courage and self-possession of an ass-head. Theseus would have bent in reverent awe before Titania. Bottom treats her as carelessly as if she were the wench of the next-door tapster. Even Christopher Sly, when he finds himself transmuted into a lord, shows some signs of astonishment. He does not accommodate himself to surrounding circumstances. . . . In the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* a similar trick is played by the Caliph Haroun Alraschid upon Abou Hassan, and he submits, with much reluctance, to believe himself the Commander of the Faithful. But having in vain sought how to explain the enigma, he yields to the belief, and then performs all the parts assigned to him, whether of business or pleasure, of counsel or gallantry, with the easy self-possession of a practised gentleman. Bottom has none of the scruples of the tinker of Burton-Heath, or the *bon vivant* of Bagdad. He sits down among the fairies as one of themselves without any astonishment; but so far from assuming, like Abou Hassan, the manners of the court where he has been so strangely intruded, he brings the language and bearing of the booth into the glittering circle of Queen Titania. He would have behaved in the same manner on the throne of the caliph, or in the bedizened chamber of the lord; and the ass-head would have victoriously carried him through. . . .

Adieu, then, Bottom the weaver! and long may you go onward prospering in your course! But the prayer is needless, for you carry about you the infallible talisman of the ass-head. You will be always sure of finding a Queen of the Fairies to heap her favours upon you, while to brighter eyes and nobler natures she remains invisible or averse. Be you ever the chosen representative of the romantic and the tender before dukes and princesses; and if the judicious laugh at your efforts, despise them in return, setting down their criticism to envy. This you have a right to do. Have they, with all their wisdom and wit, captivated the heart of a Titania as you have done? Not they—nor will they ever. Prosper, therefore, with undoubting heart, despising the babble of the wise. Go on your path rejoicing; assert loudly your claim to fill every character in life; and may you be quite sure that as long as the noble race of the Bottoms continues to exist, the chances of extraordinary good luck will fall to their lot, while in the ordinary course of life they will never be unattended by the plausive criticism of a Peter Quince.

J. A. HERAUD (*Shakespeare, His Inner Life*, p. 178, 1865): Here we have Bottom in the part of theatrical reader and manager. He has been pondering the drama, until he conjures up fears for its success, takes exceptions to incidentals, and suggests remedies. Bottom is not only critical, he is inventive. With a little practice and encouragement we shall see him writing a play himself. Indeed, with a trifling exaggera-

tion, the scene is only a caricature of what frequently happened in the Green-rooms of theatres in the poet's own day, and has happened since in that of every other. Here is instinct rashly mistaken for aptitude, and aptitude for knowledge, by the uninstructed artisan, who has to substitute shrewdness for experience. And thus it is with the neophyte actor and the ignorant manager, whose sole aim is to thrust aside the author, and reign independent of his control; altering and supplementing, according to their limited lights, what he has conceived in the fullness of the poetic faculty. . . . Soon, however, the poor players discover that their manager wears the ass's head, though he never suspects it himself; and even the poor faery queen, the temporarily-demented drama, is fain to place herself under his guardianship. She cannot help it under the circumstances; and, therefore, she gives him all the pretty pickings, the profits, and the perquisites of the theatre, leaving the author scarcely the gleaning. The fairies have charge of the presumptuous ignoramus, with the fairy queen's direction.

In a far different fashion Shakespeare conducted matters at his own theatre. There the poet presided, and the world has witnessed the result. The argument needs no other elucidation.

D. WILSON (*Caliban, the Missing Link*, 1873, p. 262): What inimitable power and humorous depth of irony are there in the Athenian weaver and prince of clownish players! Vain, conceited, consequential; he is nevertheless no mere empty lout, but rather the impersonation of characteristics which have abounded in every age, and find ample scope for their display in every social rank. Bottom is the work of the same master hand which wrought for us the Caliban and Miranda, the Puck and Ariel, of such diverse worlds. He is the very embodiment and idealisation of that self-esteem which is a human virtue by no means to be dispensed with, though it needs some strong counterpoise in the well-balanced mind. In the weak, vain man, who fancies everybody is thinking of him and looking at him, it takes the name of shyness, and claims nearest kin to modesty. With robust, intensitive vulgarity it assumes an air of universal philanthropy and good-fellowship. In the man of genius it reveals itself in very varying phases; gives to Pope his waspish irritability as a satirist, and crops out anew in the transparent mysteries of publication of his laboured-impromptu private letters; betrays itself in the self-laudatory exclusiveness which carried Wordsworth through long years of detraction and neglect to his final triumph; in the morbid introversions of Byron, and his assumed defiance of 'the world's dread 'laugh'; in the sturdy self-assertion of Burns, the honest faith of the peasant bard, that 'The rank is but the guinea stamp, The man's the gowd for a' that!' In Ben Jonson it gave character to the whole man. Goldsmith and Chatterton, Hogg and Hugh Miller, only differed from their fellows in betraying the self-esteem which more cunning adepts learn to disguise under many a mask, even from themselves. It shines in modest prefaces, writes autobiographies and diaries by the score, and publishes poems by the hundred,—'Obliged by hunger and request of friends.' Nick Bottom is thus a representative man, 'not one, but all mankind's epitome.' He is a natural genius. If he claims the lead, it is not without a recognised fitness to fulfill the duties he assumes. He is one whom nothing can put out. 'I have a device to make all well,' is his prompt reply to every difficulty, and the device, such as it is, is immediately forthcoming. . . . Bottom is as completely conceived, in all perfectness of consistency, as any character Shakespeare has drawn; ready-witted, unbounded in his self-confidence, and with a conceit nursed into the absolute proportions which we wit

ness by the admiring deference of his brother clowns. Yet this is no more than the recognition of true merit. Their admiration of his parts is rendered ungrudgingly, as it is received by him simply as his due. Peter Quince appears as responsible manager of the theatricals, and indeed is doubtless the author of 'the most lament-'able comedy.' For Nick Bottom, though equal to all else, makes no pretension to the poetic art. . . .

But fully to appreciate the ability and self-possession of Nick Bottom in the most unwonted circumstances, we must follow the translated mechanical to Titania's bower, where the enamoured queen lavishes her favours on her strange lover. His cool prosaic commonplaces fit in with her rhythmical fancies as naturally as the dull grey of the dawn meets and embraces the sunrise. . . .

We cannot but note the quaint blending of the ass with the rude Athenian 'thick-'skin'; as though the creator of Caliban had his own theory of evolution; and has here an eye to the more fitting progenitor of man. Titania would know what her sweet love desires to eat. 'Truly a peck of provender; I could munch your good 'dry oats.' The puzzled fairy queen would fain devise some fitter dainty for her lover. But no! Bottom has not achieved the dignity of that sleek smooth head, and those fair large ears, which Titania has been caressing and decorating with musk-roses, to miss their befitting provender. 'I had rather have a handful or two of dry 'peas.' It comes so naturally to him to be an ass! . . .

There are Bottoms everywhere. Nor are they without their uses. Vanity becomes admirable when carried out with such sublime unconsciousness; and here it is a vanity resting on some solid foundation, and finding expression in the assumption of a leadership which his fellows recognise as his own by right. If he will play the lion's part, 'let him roar again!' Look where we will, we may chance to come on 'sweet 'bully Bottom.' In truth, there is so much of genuine human nature in this hero of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, that it may not always be safe to peep into the looking-glass, lest evolution reassert itself for our special behoof, and his familiar countenance greet us, 'Hail, fellow, well met, give me your neif!'

J. WEISS (*Wit, Humor, and Shakespeare*, Boston, 1876, p. 110): It is also a suggestion of the subtlest humor when Titania summons her fairies to wait upon Bottom; for the fact is that the soul's airy and nimble fancies are constantly detailed to serve the donkeyism of this world. 'Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.' Divine gifts stick musk-roses in his sleek, smooth head. The world is a peg that keeps all spiritual being tethered. John Watt agonises to teach this *vis inertiae* to drag itself by the car-load; Palissy starves for twenty years to enamel its platter; Franklin charms its house against thunder; Raphael contributes halos to glorify its ignorance of divinity; all the poets gather for its beguilement, hop in its walk, and gambol before it, scratch its head, bring honey-bags, and light its farthing dip at glow-worms' eyes. Bottom's want of insight is circled round by fulness of insight, his clumsiness by dexterity. In matter of eating, he really prefers provender; 'good hay, sweet 'hay, hath no fellow.' But how shrewdly Bottom manages this holding of genius to his service! He knows how to send it to be oriental with the blossoms and the sweets, giving it the characteristic counsel not to fret itself too much in the action.

You see there is nothing sour and cynical about Bottom. His daily peck of oats, with plenty of munching-time, travels to the black cell where the drop of gall gets secreted into the ink of starving thinkers, and sings content to it on oaten straw. Bottom, full-ballasted, haltered to a brown-stone-fronted crib, with digestion always

waiting upon appetite, tosses a tester to Shakespeare, who might, if the tradition be true, have held his horse in the purlieus of the Curtain or Rose Theatre; perhaps he sub-let the holding while he slipped in to show Bottom how he is a deadly earnest fool; and the boxes crow and clap their unconsciousness of being put into the poet's celestial stocks. All this time Shakespeare is divinely restrained from bitterness by the serenity which overlooks a scene. If, like the ostrich, he had been only the largest of the birds which do not fly, he might have wrangled for his rations of ten-penny nails and leather, established perennial indigestion in literature, and furnished plumes to jackdaws. But he flew closest to the sun, and competed with the dawn for a first taste of its sweet and fresh impartiality.

Professor J. MACMILLAN BROWN ('An Early Rival of Shakespeare,' *New Zealand Maga.*, April, 1877, p. 102): Shakespeare, with all his tolerance, was unable to refrain from retaliation; but it is with no venomous pen he retaliates. . . . In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* he takes this early school of amateur player-poets, and pillories them in Bottom, Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling; and with the elfin machinery he borrows from Greene, turns his caricature, Bottom, into everlasting ridicule.

[Prof. Brown exaggerates, I think, the loan of elfin machinery from Greene, even granting that *James IV* preceded the present play, which is doubtful. GROSART (*Introd.* to Greene's *Works*, p. xxxix) says it is 'unknown which was earlier;' see the extracts from *James IV supra* in 'Source of the Plot.' In the conjecture that Greene was portrayed in Bottom, BROWN anticipates FLEAY, who observes (*Life and Work*, p. 18), 'Bottom and his scratch company have long been recognised as a personal 'satire, and the following marks would seem to indicate that Greene and the Sussex' 'company were the butts at which it was aimed. Bottom is a Johannes Factotum 'who expects a pension for his playing; his comrades are unlettered rustics who once 'obtain an audience at Theseus' court. The Earl of Sussex' men were so inferior a 'company that they acted at Court but once, viz. in January, 1591–2, and the only 'new play which can be traced to them at this date is *George a Greene*, in which 'Greene acted the part of the Pinner himself. This only shows that the circumstances 'of the fictitious and real events are not discrepant; but when we find Bottom saying 'that he will get a ballad written on his adventure, and "it shall be called Bottom's '"Dream, because it hath no bottom," and that peradventure he shall "sing it at her '"(?) death," we surely may infer an allusion to Greene's *Maiden's Dream* (*Sta-'tioners' Registers*, 6th Dec. 1591), apparently so called because it hath no maiden 'in it, and sung at the death of Sir Christopher Hatton.'—ED.]

HUDSON (*Introduction*, 1880, p. 20): But Bottom's metamorphosis is the most potent drawer out of his genius. The sense of his new head-dress stirs up all the manhood within him, and lifts his character into ludicrous greatness at once. Hitherto the seeming to be a man has made him content to be little better than an ass; but no sooner is he conscious of seeming an ass than he tries his best to be a man; while all his efforts that way only go to approve the fitness of his present seeming to his former being.

Schlegel happily remarks, that 'the droll wonder of Bottom's metamorphosis is 'merely the translation of a metaphor in its literal sense.' The turning of a figure of speech thus into visible form is a thing only to be thought of or imagined; so that no attempt to paint or represent it to the senses can ever succeed. We can bear—at

least we often have to bear—that a man should seem an ass to the mind's eye; but that he should seem such to the eye of the body is rather too much, save as it is done in those fable-pictures which have long been among the playthings of the nursery. So a child, for instance, takes great pleasure in fancying the stick he is riding to be a horse, when he would be frightened out of his wits were the stick to quicken and expand into an actual horse. In like manner we often delight in indulging fancies and giving names, when we should be shocked were our fancies to harden into facts; we enjoy visions in our sleep that would only disgust or terrify us, should we awake and find them solidified into things. The effect of Bottom's transformation can hardly be much otherwise, if set forth in visible, animated shape. Delightful to think of, it is scarcely tolerable to look upon; exquisitely true in idea, it has no truth, or even verisimilitude, when reduced to fact; so that, however gladly imagination receives it, sense and understanding revolt at it.

F. A. MARSHALL (*Irving Shakespeare*, 1888, *Introd.* ii, 325): As far as the human characters of this play are concerned, with the exception of 'sweet-faced' Nick Bottom and his amusing companions, very little can be said in their praise. Theseus and Hippolyta, Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena, are all alike essentially uninteresting. Neither in the study, nor on the stage, do they attract much of our sympathy. Their loves do not move us; not even so much as those of Biron and Rosaline, Proteus and Julia, Valentine and Silvia. If we read the play at home, we hurry over the tedious quarrels of the lovers, anxious to assist at the rehearsal of the tragi-comedy of 'Pyramus and Thisbe.' The mighty dispute that rages between Oberon and Titania about the changeling boy does not move us in the the least degree. We are much more anxious to know how Nick Bottom will acquit himself in the tragical scene between Pyramus and Thisbe. It is in the comic portion of this play that Shakespeare manifests his dramatic genius; here it is that his power of characterisation, his close observation of human nature, his subtle humour, make themselves felt.

GERMAN CRITICISMS

SCHLEGEL (*Lectures*, &c., trans. by J. BLACK, 1815, ii, 176): The *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* may be in so far compared together, that in both the influence of a wonderful world of spirits is interwoven with the turmoil of human passions and with the farcical adventures of folly. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is certainly an earlier production; but *The Tempest*, according to all appearance, was written in Shakespeare's later days; hence most critics, on the supposition that the poet must have continued to improve with increasing maturity of mind, have given the last piece a great preference over the former. I cannot, however, altogether agree with them in this; the internal worth of these two works, in my opinion, are pretty equally balanced, and a predilection for the one or the other can only be governed by personal taste. The superiority of *The Tempest* in regard to profound and original characterisation is obvious; as a whole we must always admire the masterly skill which Shakespeare has here displayed in the economy of his means, and the dexterity with which he has disguised his preparations, the scaffolding for the wonderful aërial structure. In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* again there flows a luxuriant

vein of the boldest and most fantastical invention; the most extraordinary combination of the most dissimilar ingredients seems to have arisen without effort by some ingenious and lucky accident, and the colours are of such clear transparency that we think the whole of the variegated fabric may be blown away with a breath. The fairy world here described resembles those elegant pieces of Arabesque where little Genii, with butterfly wings, rise, half embodied, above the flower cups. Twilight, moonlight, dew, and spring-perfumes are the elements of these tender spirits; they assist Nature in embroidering her carpet with green leaves, many-coloured flowers, and dazzling insects; in the human world they merely sport in a childish and wayward manner with their beneficent or noxious influences. Their most violent rage dissolves in good-natured raillery; their passions, stripped of all earthly matter, are merely an ideal dream. To correspond with this, the loves of mortals are painted as a poetical enchantment, which, by a contrary enchantment, may be immediately suspended and then renewed again. The different parts of the plot, the wedding of Theseus, the disagreement of Oberon and Titania, the flight of the two pair of lovers, and the theatrical operations of the mechanics, are so lightly and happily interwoven that they seem necessary to each other for the formation of a whole. . . . The droll wonder of the transmutation of Bottom is merely the translation of a metaphor in its literal sense; but in his behavior during the tender homage of the Fairy Queen we have a most amusing proof how much the consciousness of such a head-dress heightens the effect of his usual folly. Theseus and Hippolyta are, as it were, a splendid frame for the picture; they take no part in the action, but appear with a stately pomp. The discourse of the hero and his Amazon, as they course through the forest with their noisy hunting-train, works upon the imagination, like the fresh breath of morning, before which the shades of night disappear. *Pyramus and Thisbe* is not unmeaningly chosen as the grotesque play within the play; it is exactly like the pathetic part of the piece, a secret meeting of two lovers in the forest, and their separation by an unfortunate accident, and closes the whole with the most amusing parody.

GERVINUS (*Shakespeare*, Leipzig, 1849, i, 246): Shakespeare depicts [his fairies] as creatures devoid of refined feelings and of morality; just as we too in dreams meet with no check to our tender emotions and are freed from moral impulse and responsibility. Careless and unprincipled themselves, they tempt mortals to be unfaithful. The effects of the confusion which they have set on foot make no impression on them; with the mental torture of the lovers they have no jot of sympathy; but over their blunders they rejoice, and at their fondness they wonder. Furthermore, the poet depicts his fairies as creatures devoid of high intellectuality. If their speeches are attentively read, it will be noted that nowhere is there a thoughtful reflection ascribed to them. On one solitary occasion Puck makes a sententious observation on the infidelity of man, and whoever has penetrated the nature of these beings will instantly feel that the observation is out of harmony. . . . Titania has no inner, spiritual relations to her friend, the mother of the little Indian boy, but merely pleasure in her shape, her grace, and gifts of mimicry.

[Page 252.] In the old Romances of Chivalry, in Chaucer, in Spenser, the Fairies are wholly different creatures, without definite character or purpose; they harmonise with the whole world of chivalry in an unvarying monotony and lack of consistency. Whereas, in the Saxon Elfin-lore, Shakespeare found that which would enable him to cast aside the romantic art of the pastoral poets, and pass over to the rude popular taste of his country-folk. From Spenser's *Faerie Queene* he could learn the melody

of speech, the art of description, the brilliancy of romantic pictures, and the charm of visionary scenes; but all the haughty, pretentious, romantic devices of this Elfin-world he cast aside and grasped the little pranks of Robin Goodfellow, wherein the simple faith of the common people had been preserved in pure and unpretentious form. Thus, also, with us, in Germany, at the time of the Reformation, when the Home-life of the people was restored, the chivalric and romantic conceptions of the spiritual world of nature, were cast aside and men returned to popular beliefs, and we can read nothing which reminds us of Shakespeare's Fairy realm so strongly as the Theory of Elemental Spirits by our own Paracelsus. [This extraordinary statement should be seen in the original to vindicate the accuracy of the translation: 'man 'kann nichts lesen, was an Shakespeare's Elfenreich so sehr erinnert, wie unseres 'Paracelsus Theorie der Elementargeister.'—ED.] Indeed, it may be said that from the time when Shakespeare took to himself the dim ideas of these myths and their simple expression in prose and verse, the Saxon taste of the common people dominated in him more and more. In *Romeo and Juliet* and in *The Merchant of Venice* his sympathies with the one side and with the other are counterbalanced, almost of necessity, inasmuch as the poet is working exclusively with Italian materials. But it was the contemporaneous working on the Historical Plays which first fully and absolutely made the poet native to his home, and the scenes among the common folk in *Henry the Fourth* and *Fifth* reveal how comfortably he felt there.

ULRICI (*Shakespeare's Dramatic Art*, vol. ii, p. 72. Trans. by L. DORA SCHMITZ, London, 1876, Bohn's ed.): In the first place, it is self-evident that the play is based upon the comic view of life, that is to say, upon Shakespeare's idea of comedy. This is here expressed without reserve and in the clearest manner possible, in so far as it is not only in particular cases that the maddest freaks of accident come into conflict with human capriciousness, folly, and perversity, thus thwarting one another in turn, but that the principal spheres of life are made mutually to parody one another in mirthful irony. This last feature distinguishes *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from other comedies. Theseus and Hippolyta appear obviously to represent the grand, heroic, historical side of human nature. In place, however, of maintaining their greatness, power, and dignity, it is exhibited rather as spent in the common every-day occurrence of a marriage, which can claim no greater significance than it possesses for ordinary mortals; their heroic greatness parodies itself, inasmuch as it appears to exist for no other purpose than to be married in a suitable fashion.

[P. 74] Hence A. SCHÖLL (*Blätter für lit. Unterhaltung*, 184) very justly remarks that, 'When Demetrius and Lysander make fun of the candour with which 'these true-hearted *dilettanti* cast aside their masks during their performance, we can-'not avoid recalling to mind that they themselves had shortly before, in the wood, no 'less quickly fallen out of their own parts. [See Schlegel, above.—ED.] When these 'gentlemen consider Pyramus a bad lover, they forget that they had previously been 'no better themselves; they had then declaimed about love as unreasonably as here 'Pyramus and Thisbe. Like the latter, they were separated from their happiness by 'a wall which was no wall but a delusion, they drew daggers which were as harmless as those of Pyramus, and were, in spite of all their efforts, no better than the 'mechanics, that is to say, they were the means of making others laugh, the elves 'and ourselves. Nay, Puck makes the maddest game of these good citizens, for 'Bottom is more comfortable in the enchanted wood than they. The merry Puck 'has, indeed, by a mad prank had his laugh over the awkward mechanical and the

lovely fairy queen, but in deceiving the foolish mortals has at the same time deceived himself. For although he, the elf, has driven Lysander and Demetrius and the terrified mechanics about the wood, the elves have, in turn, been unceremoniously sent hither and thither to do the errands of Bottom, the ruling favourite of Titania; Bottom had wit enough to chaff the small Masters Cobweb, Peaseblossom, and Mustard-seed, as much as Puck had chaffed him and his fellows. Thus no party can accuse the other of anything, and in the end we do not know whether the mortals have been dreaming of elves, the elves of mortals, or we ourselves of both.' In fact, the whole play is a bantering game, in which all parties are quizzed in turn, and which, at the same time, makes game of the audience as well.

[P. 76.] The marriage festival of Theseus and Hippolyta forms, so to say, a splendid golden frame to the whole picture, with which all the several scenes stand in some sort of connection. Within it we have the gambols of the elves among one another, which, like a gay ribbon, are woven into the plans of the loving couples and into the doings of the mechanics; hence they represent a kind of relation between these two groups, while the blessings, which at the beginning they intended to bestow, and in the end actually do bestow, upon the house and lineage of Theseus make them partakers of the marriage feast, and give them a well-founded place in the drama. The play within the play, lastly, occupies the same position as a part of the wedding festivities. . . .

Human life appears conceived as a fantastic midsummer night's dream. As in a dream, the airy picture flits past our minds with the quickness of wit; the remotest regions, the strangest and most motley figures mix with one another, and, in form and composition, make an exceedingly curious medley; as in a dream they thwart, embarrass, and disembarrass one another in turn, and,—owing to their constant change of character and wavering feelings and passions,—vanish, like the figures of a dream, into an uncertain chiaroscuro; as in a dream, the play within the play holds up its puzzling concave mirror to the whole; and as, doubtless, in real dreams the shadow of reason comments upon the individual images in a state of half doubt, half belief,—at one time denying them their apparent reality, at another again, allowing itself to be carried away by them,—so this piece, in its tendency to parody, while flitting past our sight is, at the same time, always criticising itself.

Dr. H. WOELFFEL (*Album des literarischen Vereins in Nürnberg für 1852*, p. 126): If we gather, as it were, into one focus all the separate, distinguishing traits of these two characters [Lysander and Demetrius], if we seek to read the secret of their nature in their eyes, we shall unquestionably find it to be this, viz. in Lysander the poet wished to represent a noble magnanimous nature sensitive to the charms of the loveliness of soul and of spiritual beauty; but in Demetrius he has given us a nature fundamentally less noble; in its final analysis, even unlovely, and sensitive only to the impression of physical beauty. If there could be any doubt that these two characters are the opposites of each other, the poet has in a noteworthy way decided the question. The effect of the same magic juice on the two men is that Demetrius is rendered faithful, Lysander unfaithful—an incontrovertible sign that their natures, like their affections, are diametrically opposite.

This conclusion will be fully confirmed if we consider the two female characters, and from their traits and bearing, their features and demeanour, decipher their natures. Nay, in good sooth, the very names Hermia and Helena seem to corroborate our view. For, just as Hermes, the messenger of the gods, harmonises heaven

and earth, and, as Horace sings, first brought gentler customs and spiritual beauty to rude primitive man,—so the name Hermia hints of a charm which, born in Heaven, outshines physical beauty, and is as unattainable to common perception as is the sky to him who bends his eyes upon the earth. But since the days of Homer and of Troy, Helen has been the symbol of the charm of earthly beauty. And it is to Lysander that the poet gives Hermia, and to the earthborn Demetrius, Helena.

KREISSIG (*Vorlesungen*, &c., iii, 103, 1862): When foreigners question the musical euphony of the English language, Englishmen are wont to point to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, just as we Germans in turn point to the *First Part of Faust*. Such questions do not really admit of discussion. But the most pronounced contemner, however, of the scrunching, lisping, and hissing sounds of English words must be here fairly astonished at the abundance of those genuine beauties, which any good translation can convey, those similes scattered in such original and dazzling wealth, those profound thoughts, those vigorous and lovely expressions, genuine jewels as they are, with which Titania and Oberon seem to have overspread the tinted glittering garment of this delicious story. Note, for instance, the compliment to the 'fair vestal 'throned by the West,' the picture of Titania's bower, the bank whereon the wild thyme blows, the grand daybreak after the night of wild dreams, and, above all, the glorification of the poet by Theseus.

K. ELZE (*Essays*, &c., trans. by L. DORA SCHMITZ, p. 32, 1874): It is, of course, out of the question to suppose that Jonson's Masques influenced *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* it could more readily be conceived that the latter exercised an influence upon Jonson. At least in the present play, the two portions, masque and anti-masque, are divided in an almost Jonsonian manner. The love-stories of Theseus and of the Athenian youths,—to use Schlegel's words,—'form, as it were, a 'splendid frame to the picture.' Into this frame, which corresponds to the actual masque, the anti-masque is inserted, and the latter again is divided into the semi-choruses of the fairies (for they too belong to the anti-masque) and the clowns. Shakespeare has, of course, treated the whole with the most perfect artistic freedom. The two parts do not, as is frequently the case in masques, proceed internally unconnected by the side of each other, but are most skilfully interwoven. The anti-masque, in the scenes between Oberon and Titania, rises to the full poetic height of the masque, while the latter, in the dispute between Hermia and Helena, does not indeed enter the domain of the comic, but still diminishes in dignity, and Theseus in the Fifth Act actually descends to the jokes of the clowns. The Bergomask dance performed by the clowns forcibly reminds us of the outlandish nothings of the anti-masque, as pointed out by Jonson. Moreover, we feel throughout the play that like the masques it was originally intended for a private entertainment. The resemblance to the masques is still heightened by the completely lyrical, not to say operatic stamp, of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. There is no action which develops of internal necessity, and the poet has here, as Gervinus says, 'completely laid aside his great 'art of finding a motive for every action.' . . . In a word, exactly as in the masques, everything is an occurrence and a living picture rather than a plot, and the delineation of the characters is accordingly given only with slight touches. . . . Yet, however imperceptible may be [the transition from masque to anti-masque] Shakespeare's play stands far above all masques, those of Jonson not excepted, and differs from them in

essential points. Above all, it is obvious that Shakespeare has transferred the subject from the domain of learned poetry into the popular one, and has thus given it an imperishable and universally attractive substance. Just as he transformed the vulgar chronicle-histories into truly dramatic plays, so in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* he raised the masque to the highest form of art, as, in fact, his greatness in general consists in having carried all the existing dramatic species to the highest point of perfection. The difference between learned and popular poetry can nowhere appear more distinct than in comparing the present play with Jonson's masques. Jonson also made Oberon the principal character of a masque,—but what a contrast! Almost all the figures, all the images and allusions, are the exclusive property of the scholar, and can be neither understood by the people nor touch a sympathetic chord in their hearts. In the very first lines two Virgilian satyrs, Chromis and Mnasil, are introduced, who, even to Shakespeare's best audience, must have been unknown and unintelligible, and deserved to be hissed off the stage by the groundlings. Hence Jonson found it necessary to furnish his masques with copious notes, which would do honour to a German philosopher; Shakespeare never penned a note. Shakespeare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by no means effaced the mythological background, and the fabulous world of spirits peculiar to the masque, but has taken care to treat it all in an intelligible and charming manner. . . . Most genuinely national, Shakespeare shows himself in the anti-masque; whose clowns are no sylvans, fauns, or cyclops, but English tradesmen such as the poet may have become acquainted with in Stratford and London,—such as performed in the 'Coventry Plays.'

W. OECHELHÄUSER (*Einführungen in Shakespeare's Bühnen-Dramen*, 2te Aufl. 1885, ii, 277) [After quoting with approval Ulrici's theory, given above, that this play is a succession of parodies, the author, who is widely known as the advocate of a correct representation of Shakespeare's plays on the stage, continues:] In the word *parody* is the key to the only true comprehension and representation of the *Summernight's Dream*; but observe, there must be no attempt at a mere comic representation of love, least of all at a representation of true, genuine love, but at a *parody of love*. Above all, there is *nothing* in the whole play which is to be taken seriously; *every* action and situation in it is a parody, and *all persons, without exception, heroes as well as lovers, fairies as well as clowns, are exponents of this parody*.

In the midst of fairies and clowns there is no place for a serious main action. But if this be granted, then (and this it is which I now urge) let the true coloring be given to the main action when put upon the stage, and let it not, as has been hitherto the case, vaguely fluctuate between jest and earnest.

[P. 279.] There is, perhaps, no other piece which affords to managers and to actors alike, better opportunities for manifold comic effects and for a display of versatility than this very *Summernight's Dream*. It need scarcely be said that my interpretation of this tendency of the piece to parody does not contemplate a descent to low comicality, to a parody *à la* Offenbach.

If, accordingly, in the light of this interpretation, we consider more closely the presentation of the different characters, we shall find that the rôle of Duke Theseus does not in the main demand any especial exaggeration. The dignified and benevolent words which the poet, especially in the Fifth Act, puts in his mouth must be in harmony with the exterior representation of the rôle. The enlivening effect will be perceived readily enough without any aid from Theseus, as a reflex of the whole situation wherein he is placed. The old, legendary, Greek hero bears himself like an honour-

able, courteous, and, in spite of his scoffings at lovers, very respectably enamoured *bonhomme;* of the Greek or of the Hero, nothing but the name.

An exaggeration, somewhat more pronounced than that of Theseus is required for the Amazonian queen Hippolyta. Here the contrast between classicality and an appearance in Comedy is more striking; moreover there are various indications in the play which lead directly to the conclusion that the poet intended to give this rôle a palpably comic tone. The jealous Titania speaks of her derisively as 'the bouncing 'Amazon, Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love' [or, as it is given, very inadequately, in Schlegel's translation: 'Die Amazone, Die strotzende, hochaufge-'schürzte Dame, Dein Heldenliebchen.' It is needless to note that there is no trace here of 'buskin'd,' and that in the word substituted for it there is a vulgarity which no jealous fit could ever extort from Titania's refined fairy mouth. *Strotzende* does duty well enough for 'bouncing,' albeit Oechelhäuser would substitute for it, *fett, quatschelig*, 'fat, dumpy,' in which there is only a trace of 'bouncing.'—ED.] . . . The rôles of Theseus and Hippolyta acquire the genuine and befitting shade of comicality, when they are represented as a stout middle-aged pair of lovers, past their maturity, for such was unquestionably the design of the poet, and was in harmony with their active past life. The words of Titania, just quoted, refer to that corporeal superabundance which is wont to accompany mature years. But Theseus always speaks with the sedateness of ripe age. The mutual jealous recriminations of Oberon and Titania acquire herein the comic coloring which was clearly intended; thus too the amorous impatience of the elderly lovers which runs through the whole piece.

Utterly different from this must the tendency to parody be expressed in the acts and words of the pairs of youthful lovers. First of all, every actor must rid himself of any preconceived notion that he is here dealing with ideal characters, or with ordinary, lofty personages of deep and warm feelings. Here there is nought but the jesting parody of love's passion. . . . One of Hermia's characteristics is lack of respect for her father, who complains of her 'stubborn harshness'; as also her pert questions and answers to the Duke, whose threats of death or enduring spinsterhood she treats with open levity, and behind the Duke's back snaps her fingers at both of them. . . .

[P. 283] Actresses, therefore, need not fruitlessly try to make two fondly and devotedly loving characters out of Hermia or Helena, or hope to cloak Helena's chase after Demetrius in the guise of true womanliness; it is impossible and will only prove tedious. . . .

[P. 285] There is a rich opportunity in Hermia's blustering father, Egeus. Here the colours should be well laid on. It is plain that Theseus is merely making merry with him when he says to Hermia: 'To you your father should be as a god,' &c.; and to Egeus's appeals Theseus responds merely jocosely, as Wehl observed. [See Wehl's description of the first performance of this play in Berlin, *post*.—ED.]

[P. 287] As regards the Interlude, the colours may be laid heavily on the Artisans, but nothing vulgar in acting or movement, especially in the dance at the close, must be tolerated. Their most prominent trait is naïveté; not the smallest suspicion have they of their boorishness; the more seriously they perform, the more laughable are they. . . . The spectators on the stage of the Interlude must fall into the plan and accompany the clowns' play with their encouragement and applause. For the public at large there lies in this clowns' comedy the chief attraction of the piece.

NOTABLE PERFORMANCES

FEODOR WEHL (*Didaskalien*, Leipsic, 1867, p. 2): When Tieck, in the hey-day of his life, was in Dresden, he pleaded enthusiastically for a performance of the 'Summernight's Dream.' But actors, managers, and theatre-goers shook their heads. 'The thing is impossible,' said the knowing ones. 'The idea is a chimera,—a dream 'of Queen Mab,—it can never be realised.'

Tieck flung himself angrily back in his chair, and held his peace.

Years passed by.

At last Tieck was summoned to Berlin, to the Court of Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth, and among the pieces of poetry which he there read to attentive ears was Shakespeare's 'Summernight's Dream.' At the conclusion of the reading, which had given the keenest delight to the illustrious audience, the King asked: 'Is it really 'a fact that this piece cannot be performed on the stage?'

Tieck, as he himself often afterwards humourously related, was thunderstruck. He felt his heart beat to the very tip of his tongue, and for a minute language failed him. For more than twenty years, almost a lifetime, his cherished idea had been repelled with cold opposition, prosaic arguments, or sympathetic shrugs. And now a monarch, intellectual and powerful, had asked if the play could not be performed! Tieck's head swam; before his eyes floated the vision of a fulfillment, at the close of his life, of one of the dearest wishes of his heart. 'Your majesty!' he cried at last, 'Your majesty! If I only had permission and the means, it would make the most 'enchanting performance on earth!'

'Good then, set to work, Master Ludovico,' replied Friedrich Wilhelm, in his pleasant, jesting way. 'I give you full power, and will order Kuestner (the Superintendent at that time of the Royal Theatre) to place the theatre and all his soupes (actors) at your disposal.'

It was the happiest day of Ludwig Tieck's life! The aged poet, crippled with rheumatism, reached his home, intoxicated with joy. The whole night he was thinking, pondering, ruminating, scene-shifting. The next day he arranged the Comedy, read it to the actors who were to take part in it, and consulted with FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY about the needful music.

The aged Master Ludwig was rejuvenated; vanished were his years, his feebleness, his valetudinarianism. Day after day he wrote, he spoke, he drove hither and thither,—his whole soul was in the work which he was now to make alive.

At last the day came which was to reveal it to the doubting and astonished eyes of the public. And what a public! All that Berlin could show of celebrities in Science, in Art, in intellect, in acknowledged or in struggling Authorship, in talent, in genius, in beauty, and grace,—all were invited to the royal palace at Potsdam, where the first representation was to take place.

The present writer was so fortunate as to be one of the invited guests, and never can he forget the impression then made on him.

The stage was set as far as possible in the Old English style, only, as was natural, it was furnished in the most beautiful and tasteful way. In the Orchestra stood Mendelssohn, beaming with joy, behind him sat Tieck, with kindling looks, handsome, and transfigured like a god. Around was gathered the glittering court, and in the rear the rising rows of invited guests.

What an assemblage! There sat the great Humboldt, the learned Boekh, Bach-

mann, the historians Raumer and Ranke, all the Professors of the University, the poets Kopisch, Kugler, Bettina von Arnim, Paalzow, Theodor Mundt, Willibad Alexis, Rellstab, Crelinger, Varnhagen von Ense, and the numberless host of the other guests.

It was a time when all the world was enthusiastic over Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth. His gift as a public speaker, his wit, his love and knowledge of Art had charmed all classes, and filled them with hope. All hearts went out to meet him as he entered, gay, joyous, smiling, and took his place among the guests.

Verily, we seemed transported to the age of Versailles in the days of the Louises. It was a gala-day for the realm, fairer and more brilliant than any hitherto in its history.

What pleasure shone in all faces, what anticipation, what suspense! An eventful moment was it when the King took his seat, and the beaming Tieck nodded to his joyous friend in the Orchestra, and the music began, that charming, original, bewitching music which clung so closely to the innermost meaning of the poetry and to the suggestions of Tieck. The Wedding March has become a popular, an immortal composition; but how lovely, how delicious, how exquisite, and here and there so full of frolic, is all the rest of it! With a master's power, which cannot be too much admired, Mendelssohn has given expression in one continuous harmony to the soft whisperings of elves, to the rustlings and flutterings of a moonlit night, to all the enchantment of love, to the clumsy nonsense of the rude mechanicals, and to the whizzings and buzzings of the mad Puck.

How it then caught the fancy of that select audience! They listened, they marvelled, they were in a dream!

And when at last the play fairly began, how like a holy benediction it fell upon all, no one stirred, no one moved, as though spellbound all sat to the very last, and then an indescribable enthusiasm burst forth, every one, from the King down to the smallest authorkin, applauded and clapped, and clapped again.

Take it for all in all, it was a day never to be forgotten, it was a day when before the eyes of an art-loving monarch, a poet revealed the miracle of a representation, and superbly proved that it was no impossibility to those who were devoted to art. In this 'Summernight's Dream' the elfin world seemed again to live; elves sprang up from the ground, from the air, from the trees, from the flowers! they fluttered in the beams of the moon! Light, shade, sound, echo, leaves and blooms, sighings and singings, and shoutings for joy! everything helped to make the wonder true and living!

Not for a second time can the like be seen.

It was the highest pinnacle of the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth. Who could have dreamt that behind this glittering play of poetic fancy there stood dark and bloody Revolution, and fateful Death? Yet it was even so!

[After sundry suggestions as to the modulation of the voice when Mendelssohn's music accompanies the performance on the stage, Wehl gives the following extraordinary interpretation, p. 15: 'The actor who personates Theseus must have a joyous, gracious bearing. When he threatens Hermia with death or separation from the society of man, in case of her disobedience to her father, he must speak in a roguish, 'humorous style, and not in the sober earnestness with which the words are usually 'spoken.' The inference is fair that Wehl is reporting the style of Theseus's addre.. as it was given at this celebrated performance under Tieck's direction. OECHELHÄUSER, as we have seen above, approves of this interpretation.—ED.]

TH. FONTANE (*Aus England*, Stuttgart, 1860, p. 49) gives an elaborate description, scene by scene, of the revival of this play by CHARLES KEAN. The most noteworthy item is, perhaps, his account of Puck who 'grows out of the ground on a 'toadstool.' 'Puck was acted by a child, a blond, roguish girl, about ten years old. 'This was well devised and accords with the traditional ideas of Robin Goodfellow. 'The Costume was well chosen: dark brownish-red garment, trimmed with blood-'red moss and lichens; a similar crown was on the blond somewhat dishevelled hair. 'Arms thin and bare and as long as though she belonged to the Clan Campbell, 'whose arms reach to the knees. In theory I am thoroughly agreed with this way 'of representing Puck, but in practice there will be always great difficulties. This 'ten year old Miss Ellen Terry was a downright intolerable, precocious, genuine 'English ill-bred, unchildlike child. Nevertheless the impression of her mere 'appearance is so deep that I cannot now imagine a grown up Puck, with a full neck 'and round arms. Let me record the way in which, on two occasions when he has to 'hasten, Puck disappeared. The first time he seemed to stand upon a board which 'with one sudden pull, jerked him behind the coulisse; the second time he actually 'flew like an arrow through the air. Both times by machinery.' [No one can bear an allusion to her salad days, her extremely salad days, with better grace than she who has been ever since those days so hung upon with admiration and applause.—ED.]

In the *Introduction* to the edition of this play illustrated by J. MOYR SMITH (London, 1892, p. xii), there are full accounts of the setting on the stage at the representations by Mr. PHELPS, at Sadler's Wells, by Mr. CHARLES CALVERT, at Manchester, and by Mr. BENSON at the Globe Theatre in London. From the account of the first of these we learn that with Mr. Phelps was associated Mr. FREDERIC FENTON as scenic artist. The latter says: 'In those days' [the date is nowhere given], 'lighting was 'a serious difficulty. Very few theatres were enabled to have gas. When Phelps 'and Greenwood took the management into their hands, the lighting of Sadler's 'Wells was merely upright side-lights, about six lamps to each entrance, which were 'placed on angular frames, and revolved to darken the stage; no lights above. 'When set pieces were used, a tray of oil lamps was placed behind them, with 'coloured glasses for moonlight. For the footlights (or floats) there was a large pipe, 'with two vases at each end, with a supply of oil to charge the argand burners on 'the pipes; it was lowered out between the acts, to be trimmed as necessity required. '... I obtained permission for the gas to be supplied as a permanent lighting for the 'theatre, and it was used for the first time in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. With 'its introduction the smell of oil and sawdust, which was the prevailing odour of all 'theatres, was finally removed.... The effect of movement was given by a diorama '—that is, two sets of scenes moving simultaneously.... For the first time used, to 'give a kind of mist, I sent to Glasgow expressly for a piece of blue net, the same 'size as the act-drop, without a seam. This after the first act, was kept down for the 'whole performance of the Dream, light being on the stage sufficient to illuminate 'the actors behind it.' In addition to this diaphanous blue net, other thicknesses of gauze, partly painted, were used occasionally to deepen the misty effect, and to give the illusion necessary when Oberon tells Puck to 'overcast the night.'

WILLIAM WINTER (*Old Shrines and Ivy*, 1892, p. 173): The attentive observer of the stage version made by AUGUSTIN DALY.—and conspicuously used by him

when he revived [this play] at his Theatre on January 31, 1888,—would observe that much new and effective stage business was introduced. The disposition of the groups at the start was fresh, and so was the treatment of the quarrel between Oberon and Titania, with the disappearance of the Indian child. The moonlight effects, in the transition from Act II. to Act III. and the gradual assembly of goblins and fairies in shadowy mists through which the fire-flies glimmered, at the close of Act III., were novel and beautiful. Cuts and transpositions were made at the end of Act IV. in order to close it with the voyage of the barge of Theseus, through a summer landscape, on the silver stream that rippled down to Athens. The Third Act was judiciously compressed, so that the spectator might not see too much of the perplexed and wrangling lovers. But little of the original text was omitted. The music for the choruses was selected from various English composers,—that of Mendelssohn being prescribed only for the orchestra.

COSTUME

KNIGHT (*Introductory Notice*, p. 333): For the costume of the Greeks in the heroical ages we must look to the frieze of the Parthenon. It has been justly remarked (*Elgin Marbles*, p. 165) that we are not to consider the figures of the Parthenon frieze as affording us 'a close representation of the national costume,' harmony of composition having been the principal object of the sculptors. But, nevertheless, although not one figure in all the groups may be represented as fully attired according to the custom of the country, nearly all the component parts of the ancient Greek dress are to be found in the frieze. Horsemen are certainly represented with no garment but the chlamys, according to the practice of the sculptors of that age; but the tunic which was worn beneath it is seen upon others, as well as the cothurnus, or buskin, and the petasus, or Thessalian hat, which all together completed the male attire of that period. On other figures may be observed the Greek crested helmet and cuirass; the closer skull-cap, made of leather, and the large circular shield, &c. The Greeks of the heroic ages wore the sword under the left arm-pit, so that the pommel touched the nipple of the breast. It hung almost horizontally in a belt which passed over the right shoulder. It was straight, intended for cutting and thrusting, with a leaf-shaped blade, and not above twenty inches long. It had no guard, but a cross bar, which, with the scabbard, was beautifully ornamented. The hilts of the Greek swords were sometimes of ivory and gold. The Greek bow was made of two long goat's horns fastened into a handle. The original bowstrings were thongs of leather, but afterwards horse-hair was substituted. The knocks were generally of gold, whilst metal and silver also ornamented the bows on other parts. The arrow-heads were sometimes pyramidal, and the shafts were furnished with feathers. They were carried in quivers, which, with the bow, were slung behind the shoulders. Some of these were square, others round, with covers to protect the arrows from dust and rain. Several which appear on fictile vases seem to have been lined with skins. The spear was generally of ash, with a leaf-shaped head of metal, and furnished with a pointed ferrule at the butt, with which it was stuck in the ground,—a method used, according to Homer, when the troops rested on their arms, or slept upon their shields. The hunting-spear (in Xenophon and Pollux) had two salient parts, sometimes three crescents, to prevent the advance of the wounded animal. On the coins of Ætolia is an undoubted hunting-spear.

The female dress consisted of the long sleeveless tunic (*stola* or *calasiris*), or a tunic with shoulder-flaps almost to the elbow, and fastened by one or more buttons down the arm (*axillaris*). Both descriptions hung in folds to the feet, which were protected by a very simple sandal (*solea* or *crepida*). Over the tunic was worn the *peplum*, a square cloth or veil fastened to the shoulders, and hanging over the bosom as low as the zone (*tænia* or *strophium*), which confined the tunic just beneath the bust. Athenian women of high rank wore hair-pins (one ornamented with a cicada, or grasshopper, is engraved in Hope's *Costume of the Ancients*, plate 138), ribands or fillets, wreaths of flowers, &c. The hair of both sexes was worn in long, formal ringlets, either of a flat and zigzagged, or of a round and corkscrew shape.

The lower orders of Greeks were clad in a short tunic of coarse materials, over which slaves wore a sort of leathern jacket, called *dipthera;* slaves were also distinguished from freemen by their hair being closely shorn.

The Amazons are generally represented on the Etruscan vases in short embroidered tunics with sleeves to the wrist (the peculiar distinction of Asiatic or barbarian nations), pantaloons, ornamented with stars and flowers to correspond with the tunic, the *chlamys*, or short military cloak, and the Phrygian cap or bonnet. Hippolyta is seen so attired on horseback contending with Theseus. Vide Hope's *Costumes*.

E. W. GODWIN, F. S. A. (*The Architect*, 8 May, 1875): In affixing an approximate date for the action, I see no reason why [this play] should not be considered as wholly belonging to its author's time. The proper names . . . are no doubt eminently Greek, but the woods where Hermia and Helena 'upon faint primrose beds were 'wont to lie' are as English as the Clowns and the Fairies, than which nothing can be more English. The fact that Theseus refers to his battle with the Amazons, . . . although strictly in accordance with the classic legend, is hardly sufficient to weigh down the host of improbabilities that crowd the stage when this play is produced with costume, &c., in imitation of Greek fashions. Again, when Theseus talks of the livery of a nun, shady cloisters, and the like, he is of course distinctly referring to the votaries of Diana; and when the ladies and gentlemen swear they swear by pagan deities, although the names they give are Roman. But Puck and Bottom,—nay, even tall Helena and proud Titania,—each is quite enough to overweigh the Greek element in the play. Still, if it must be produced with classic accessories, we should do well to be true to the little there is of classic reference. Thus, although Theseus, in the heroic characrer we have of him, may be a myth, still the connection of his name with that of fair Helen of Troy brings the man within the range of archæology. And thus we should be led to place his union with Hippolyta only a few years before the siege of Troy. . . . If then the play of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* must needs be acted, and if it must needs be classically clothed,—and there are many reasons against both *ifs*,—the architecture, costume, and accessories may very well be the same as those in *Troilus and Cressida*. One thing is, or ought to be, quite clear, and that is that the Acropolis of Athens, as we know it, with its Parthenon, Erectheium, and Propylea, has just about as much relation to the Greeks of the time of Ulysses or Theseus as the Reform Club has to King John. We have, indeed, to travel back, not merely beyond the time of the Parthenon (438–420 B. C.), or beyond that of its predecessor (650 B. C.), but beyond the days of Hesiod and Homer (900 B. C.), past the Dorian conquest of the Achaians in Peloponnêsos, and so higher up the stream of time until we reach the early period of the Pelasgic civilisation. . . . I would accept the period 1184–900 B. C. in preference to any later or earlier

time as that wherein to seek the architecture and costume of the two plays above mentioned.

A Room in the Palace of Theseus is the only architectural scene in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and for the character of this interior we must turn to Assyria and Persepolis, to the descriptions of Solomon's Temple and house of the Forest of Lebanon (1005 B. C.), and the fragments of Mycenæ and other Pelasgic towns. . . .

[15 May, 1875.] The costume of Greeks and Trojans in that wide-margined period of time that I selected for the action of *Troilus and Cressida*, *i. e.* 1184–900 B. C., is by no means ready to our hands. . . . Although the earliest figure-painted vessels in the First Vase-Room of the [British] Museum may not take us further back than 500 B. C., and the sculptures of the Temple at Ægina may lead us certainly to no earlier period, yet by taking these as our *point de départ*, and so going up the stream of time until we reach the North-west palace at Nimroud, c. 900 B. C., we may, by the collateral assistance of Homer and Hesiod, together with such evidence as may be derived from Keltic remains, be enabled to arrive at something like a possible, if not probable, conclusion as to the costume of Achaians and Trojans in the Heroic days. . . . As to the several articles of dress, the *Iliad* supplies us with minute particulars, and from these we learn that the full armour, which was mostly made of brass, consisted of:—1, the helmet; 2, the thorax or cuirass over a linen vest; 3, the cuissots or thigh-pieces, and 4, the greaves; no mention is anywhere made of the leather, felt, or metal straps which we find depending from the lower edge of the cuirass in the armed figures on vases of a much later period. Of belts we have three kinds, the zone or waist belt, the sword belt, and the shield belt. Besides the sword and shield we have the spear, the bow, and the iron-studded mace, which last is very suggestive of the *morning-star* or *holy-water-sprinkler* of mediæval armouries. The men wore the hair long, and their skin was brown. The costume of the other sex seems to have depended for its effect not so much on quantity as on quality, and more than anything else on the proportion, articulation, and undulation of the splendour of human form. The chiton or tunic, the broad zone, the diplax, pallium or mantle sweeping the ground, the peplos or veil, the sandals, and the head-dress formed a complete toilette. Among their personal ornaments were ear-rings, diadems, or frontals, chains, brooches, and necklaces.

And now turn to the actors in this drama. Taking the Greeks first, we have Achilles presented to us as golden-haired; his sceptre is starred with gold studs; his greaves are of ductile tin; his cuissots are of silver; his cuirass of gold; his four-fold helm of sculptured (*repoussé*) brass with a golden crest of horsehair *gilded*; his shield of gold, silver, brass, and tin divided by concentric rings, each divided into four compartments; his sword is of bronze, starred with gems; and his baldrick is embroidered in various colours. Agamemnon wears, when unarmed, a fine linen vest, a purple mantle, embroidered sandals, and a lion's skin at night over his shoulders. When armed he wears a four-fold helm with horsehair plume; greaves with silver buckles; a wonderful cuirass composed of ten rows of azure steel, twenty of tin, and twelve of gold, with three dragons rising to the neck; a baldrick radiant with embroidery; a sword with gold hilt, silver sheath, and gold hangers; a broad belt with silver plates; and a shield of ten concentric bands or zones of brass, with twenty bosses and a Gorgon in the midst. Menelaus wore a leopard's skin at night. Old Nestor's mantle is of soft, warm wool, doubly lined; his shield is of gold, and he wears a scarf of divers colours. . . . Ajax is clothed in steel and carries a terrific mace, crowned with studs of iron, whilst Patroclus wears brass, silver buckled, a

flaming cuirass of a thousand dyes, a sword studded with gold, and a sword-belt like a starry zone. On the Trojan side, we see Hektor with a shield *reaching from neck to ankle;* a plume or crest of white and black horsehair; a brass cuirass and spears about sixteen feet long. Paris, in curling golden tresses, comes before us in gilded armour, buckled with silver buckles; his thigh-pieces are wrought with flowers; his helmet is fastened by a strap of tough bull-hide; a leopard's skin he wears as a cloak, and his bow hangs across his shoulders. Of the fair Helen Homer says but little. . . . We see her pass out of the palace, attended by her two hand-maidens, her face and arms covered by a thin white peplos, her soft white chiton tucked up through the gold zone beneath her swelling bosom, and her embroidered diplax fastened with clasps of gold, whilst both peplos and diplax fall in multitudinous folds until they lose themselves in a train of rippling waves. . . .

Such then is the evidence we gather from Homer as to the costume of *Troilus and Cressida* [as Godwin before remarked, it is the same for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*]; Hesiod, in so far as he refers to costume, confirms it. . . .

For the women's armlets, bracelets, necklaces, and earrings; for the woven patterns, and the embroidered borders of the square mantle and the chiton, we cannot be far wrong if we seek in the sculptures of the reign of Assur-nazir-pal (c. 880 B. C.). Necklaces of beads and of numerous small pendants might be used, if preferred, instead of the bolder medallion necklace. The twisted snake-like form as well as the single medallion may be used for bracelets. The hair was rolled and confined within a caul or net, made of coloured or gold thread, and a fillet not unusually of thin fine gold bound the base of the net. This fillet, in the cases of very important ladies, might expand into a frontal or diadem of thin gold, bent round the forehead from ear to ear and decorated with very delicate *repoussé* work.

PETER SQUENTZ

HALLIWELL (*Introd.*, Folio ed. 1856, p. 12): Bottom appears to have been then considered the most prominent character in the play; and 'the merry conceited 'humours of Bottom the Weaver,' with a portion of the fairy scenes, were extracted from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and made into a farce or droll (*The Merry conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver, as it hath been often publikely acted by some of his Majesties Comedians, and lately privately presented by several apprentices for their harmless recreation, with great applause*, 4to, Lond. 1661), which was very frequently played 'on the sly,' after the suppression of the theatres. 'When the pub-'lique theatres were shut up,' observes Kirkman, 'and the actors forbidden to present 'us with any of their tragedies, because we had enough of that in ernest; and com-'edies, because the vices of the age were too lively and smartly represented; then 'all that we could divert ourselves with were these humours and pieces of plays, 'which passing under the name of a merry conceited fellow called Bottom the 'Weaver, Simpleton the Smith, John Swabber, or some such title, were only allowed 'us, and that but by stealth too, and under pretence of rope-dancing and the like.'—*The Wits*, 1673, an abridgement of Kirkman's *Wits, or Sport upon Sport*, 1672. Both these contain *The Humours of Bottom the Weaver*, in which Puck is transformed by name into Pugg. [In the *Dramatis Personæ* are instances of the 'doubling' of characters, e. g. '*Oberon*, King of the Fairies, who likewise may present the Duke. '*Titania* his Queen, the Dutchess. *Pugg.* A Spirit, a Lord. *Pyramus, Thisbe, Wall.* Who likewise may present three Fairies.'—ED.]

TIECK (*Deutsches Theater*, Berlin, 1817, ii, xvi) suggests that the foregoing Droll had, by some means, found its way to Germany, and was there translated for the stage, and brought out at Altdorf, by DANIEL SCHWENTER; 'Titania was omitted, 'Bottom changed into Pickleherring, and much added to the fun, and many phrases 'literally retained from Shakespeare, with whose play he was not acquainted.'

VOSS (*Trans.*, 1818, i, 506) thinks that Schwenter might have adopted some old legend of Folk-lore. But the literalness with which Shakespeare's words are translated renders this impossible, unless Shakespeare went to the same source.

ALBERT COHN (*Shakespeare in Germany*, 1865, p. cxxx) denies that Schwenter could have translated *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom*, which was not printed till 1660; Schwenter died in 1636. 'Nothing can be more probable,' says Cohn, 'than that Shakespeare's piece was brought to Germany by the English Come-'dians. Such a farce must have been especially suitable to their object. That the 'whole of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* belonged to the acting stock of the Come-'dians is very unlikely. On the contrary, they probably took from it only the comedy 'of the clowns, as may also have been done occasionally in England.'

Argument on this point is, however, somewhat superfluous, seeing that no copy of Schwenter's work has survived. Indeed all we know of it is derived from Gryphius, one of Germany's earliest dramatists, who in 1663 issued, ABSURDA COMICA, *Or Herr Peter Squentz. A Pasquinade by Andreas Gryphius*, and from the 'Address to 'the Reader,' we might be permitted to doubt (if the whole question were of any moment) whether any fragment even of Schwenter's work has survived in Gryphius's *Absurda Comica*. There need be no clashing of dates between *The Merry Conceited Humours* in 1660 and the *Absurda Comica* in 1663, and there can be no question that the latter is taken from the former. The only writer, as far as I know, who denies that Shakespeare was copied, is Dr W. Bell, who promises (*Shakespeare's Puck*, &c, 1864, iii, 181) that he will 'bring historical proof of a German origin of a 'very early date,' but I can nowhere find his promise explicitly fulfilled.

Tieck reprinted Gryphius's pasquinade in his *Deutsches Theater* (ii, 235). The address 'to the Most gracious and Highly honoured Reader' is as follows:—'Herr 'Peter Squentz, a man no longer unknown in Germany, and greatly celebrated in his 'own estimation, is herewith presented to you. Whither or not his sallies are as 'pointed, as he himself thinks, they have been hitherto in various theatres received 'and laughed at, with especial merriment by the audience, and, in consequence here 'and there, wits have been found who, without shame or scruple, have not hesitated 'to claim his parentage. Wherefore, in order that he may be no longer indebted to 'strangers, be it known that Daniel Schwenter, a man of high desert throughout Ger-'many, and skilled in all kinds of languages and in the mathematics, first introduced 'him on the stage at Altdorff, whence he travelled further and further until at last he 'encountered my dearest friend, who had him better equipped, enlarged by more 'characters, and subjected him, alongside of one of his own tragedies, to the eyes and judgement of all. But inasmuch as this friend, engrossed by weightier matters, subsequently quite forgot him, I have ventured to summon Herr Peter Squentz from the shelves of my aforesaid friend's library, and to send him in type to thee my 'most gracious and highly honoured reader; if thou wilt accept him with favour thou mayest forthwith expect the incomparable *Horribilicribrifax*, depicted by the same

'brush to which we owe the latest strokes on the perfected portrait of Peter Squentz, 'and herewith I remain thy ever devoted

'PHILIP-GREGORIO RIESENTOD.'

As we are here concerned only in detecting the traces of Shakespeare, it suffices to say that in the *Absurda Comica* there is nothing of the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and that an Interlude of *Pyramus and Thisbe* is acted before King Theodore, and Cassandra, his wife, Serenus, the Prince, Violandra, the Princess, and Eubulus, the Chamberlain. The meaningless name, *Peter Squentz*, is clearly Shakespeare's *Peter Quince*, adopted apparently in ignorance that 'Quince' is the name of the fruit, which in German is *Quitte*. The *Dramatis Personæ*, other than those just mentioned, are:—

Herr Peter Squentz, *Writer and Schoolmaster in Rumpels-Kirchen*,	Prologus *and* Epilogus.
Pickleherring, *the King's merry counsellor*,	Piramus.
Meister Krix-over-and-over-again, *Smith*,	the Moon.
Meister Bulla Butain, *Bellowsmaker*,	Wall.
Meister Klipperling, *Joiner*,	Lion.
Meister Lollinger, *Weaver and Head Chorister*,	Fountain.
Meister Klotz-George, *Bobbin-maker*,	Thisbe.

In this list 'Bulla Butain' is of itself quite sufficient to stamp the play as an adaptation from Shakespeare.

In the first scene Peter Squentz unfolds the story of Pyramus and Thisbe 'as told 'by that pious father of the church, Ovidius, in his *Memorium phosis*,' and while he is distributing the characters Pickleherring asks: 'Does the lion have much to speak?'

Peter Squentz. No, the lion has only to roar.

Pickleherring. Aha, then I will be the lion, for I am not fond of learning things by heart.

Peter Squentz. No, no! Mons. Pickleherring has to act the chief part.

Pickleherring. Am I clever enough to be a chief person?

Peter Squentz. Of course. But as there must be a noble, commanding, dignified man for the *Prologus* and *Epilogus*, I will take that part. . . .

Klip. Who must act the lion, then? I think it would suit me best, because he hasn't much to say.

Kricks. Marry, I think it would sound too frightful if a fierce lion should come bounding in, and not say a word. That would frighten the ladies too horribly.

Klotz. There I agree with you. On account of the ladies you ought to say right off that you are no real lion at all, but only Klipperling, the joiner.

Pickleherring. And let your leather apron dangle out through the lion's skin. . . .

Klipperling. Never you mind, never you mind, I will roar so exquisitely that the King and Queen will say, 'dear little lionkin, roar again!'

Peter Squentz. In the meanwhile let your nails grow nice and long, and don't shave your beard, and then you will look all the more like a lion,—so that *difficultet* is over. But there's another thing; the water of my understanding will not drive the mill wheels of my brain:—the father of the church, Ovidius, writes that the moon shone, and we do not know whether the moon shines or not when we play our play.

Pickleherring. That's a hard thing.

Kricks. That's easily settled; look in the Calendar and see if the moon shines on that day.

Klotz. Yes, if we only had one.

Lollinger. Here, I have one. . . . Hi there, Squire Pickleherring, you understand Calendars, just look and see if the moon will shine.

Pickleherring. All right, all right, gentlemen, the moon will shine when we play. . . .

Kricks. Hark ye, what has just occurred to me. I'll tie some faggots round my waist, and carry a light in a lanthorn, and represent moon. . . .

Peter Squentz. What shall we do for a wall? . . . Piramus and Thisbe must speak through a hole in the wall.

Klipperling. I think we had better daub a fellow all over with mud and loam, and have him say that he is Wall. . . .

Peter Squentz. Squire Pickleherring you must be Pyramus.

Pickleherring. Perry must [*Birnen Most*]? what sort of a chap is that?

Peter Squentz. He is the most gentlemanlike person in the whole play—a *chevalieur*, soldier, and lover. . . .

Peter Squentz. Where shall we find a Thisbe?

Lollinger. Klotz-George can act her the best. . . .

Peter Squentz. No that won't do at all. He has a big beard. . . .

Bullabutain. You must speak small, small, small.

Klotz. Thissen [*Also?*]?

Peter Squentz. Smaller yet.

Klotz. Well, well, I'll do it right. I'll speak so small and lovely that the King and Queen will just dote on me. . . .

Peter Squentz. Gentlemen, con your parts diligently, I will finish the Comedy tomorrow, and you will get your parts, therefore, day after tomorrow.

The foregoing affords ample evidence of the source whence came *Peter Squentz*. Throughout the rest of the play there are sundry whiffs of Shakespeare, but it would be time wasted either to point them out or to read them.

JOHN SPENCER

COLLIER (*Annals of the Stage*, i, 459, 2d ed. 1879): In the autumn of 1631 a very singular circumstance occurred, connected with the history of the stage. Unless the whole story were a malicious invention by some of the many enemies of John Williams, then Bishop of Lincoln (who, previous to his disgrace, had filled the office of Lord Keeper), he had a play represented in his house in London, on Sunday, September 27th. The piece chosen, for this occasion, at least did credit to his taste, for it appears to have been Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*,* and it was got up as a private amusement. The animosity of Laud to Williams is well known, and in the Library at Lambeth Palace is a mass of documents referring to different charges against him, thus indorsed in the handwriting of Laud himself: 'These papers con-'cerning the Bp. of Lincoln wear delivered to me bye his Majesty's command.' One of them is an admonitory letter from a person of the name of John Spencer (who seems to have been a puritanical preacher), which purports to have been addressed

* One of the actors exhibited himself in an Ass's head, no doubt in the part of Bottom, and in the margin of the document relating to this event we read the words, The playe, *M. Nights Dr.*'

to some lady, not named, who was present on the occasion of the performance of the play. [To this letter is appended what] purports to be a copy of an order, or decree, made by a self-constituted Court among the Puritans, for the censure and punishment of offences of the kind:

'A COPIE OF THE ORDER, OR DECREE (*ex officio Comisarii generalis*) JOHN SPENCER.

'Forasmuch as this Courte hath beene informed, by Mr. Comisary general, of a 'greate misdemeanor committed in the house of the right honorable Lo. Bishopp of 'Lincolne, by entertaining into his house divers Knights and Ladyes, with many 'other householders servants, uppon the 27th Septembris, being the Saboth day, to 'see a playe or tragidie there acted; which began aboute tenn of the clocke at night, 'and ended about two or three of the clocke in the morning:

'Wee doe therefore order, and decree, that the Rt. honorable John, Lord Bishopp 'of Lincolne, shall, for his offence, erect a free schoole in Eaton, or else at Greate 'Staughton, and endowe the same with 20*l.* per ann. for the maintenance of the 'schoolmaster for ever. . . .

'Likewise we doe order, that Mr. Wilson, because hee was a speciall plotter and 'contriver of this business, and did in such a brutishe manner acte the same with an 'Asses head; and therefore hee shall uppon Tuisday next, from 6 of the clocke in 'the morning till six of the clocke at night, sitt in the Porters Lodge at my Lords 'Bishopps House, with his feete in the stocks and attyred with his asse head, and a 'bottle of hay sett before him, and this subscription on his breast:

'Good people I have played the beast,
And brought ill things to passe.
I was a man, but thus have made
My selfe a silly Asse.'

Regarding this remarkable incident we are without further information from any quarter.

[As much of the above order as refers to 'Mr. Wilson' is given by INGLEBY in his *Centurie of Prayse*, p. 182, ed. ii. Miss TOULMIN-SMITH, who edited the second edition of Ingleby's volume, remarks: 'I give this doubtful "allusion," because sev-'eral, following Collier's *Annals*, have taken for granted that it refers to the *Mid-'summer Night's Dream*. Beyond these notices, however, there is nothing to tell 'with certainty what the play was. Near the bottom of page 3 in the margin have 'been written the words "the play M Night Dr," but these are evidently the work 'of a later hand and have been written over an erasure; they are not in the hand of 'either Laud, Lincoln, or Spencer, or of the endorser of the paper, but look like a bad imitation of old writing. No reliance can therefore be placed on them.

'Elsewhere, Spencer speaks of the play as a *comedy;* if Wilson were not the 'author, at least he had a large share in the arrangement of it. In a *Discourse of 'Divers Petitions*, 1641, p. 19, speaking of Bp. Lincoln and this presentment, Spen-'cer says, "one Mr. Wilson a cunning Musition having contrived a curious Comodie, '"and plotted it so, that he must needs have it acted upon the Sunday night, for he '"was to go the next day toward the Court; the Bishop put it off till nine of the "clock at night."']

THE FAIRY QUEEN

In 1692 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* furnished the framework of an Opera called *The Fairy Queen*, whereof 'the instrumental and vocal parts were composed 'by Mr. Purcell,' so says Downes in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, and 'the dances by Mr. 'Priest.' As this work is quite rare, and is the nearest approach that we have to a 'Players Quarto' of this play, a brief account of it may not be unacceptable. Its date is only seven years later than F_4 and fifteen years earlier than Rowe.

The Preface is a plea for the establishment of opera in England, and incidentally gives us a hint of the intoning of blank verse, which we have reason to believe was the practice of the stage. 'That Sir William Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes* was the 'first *Opera* we ever had in England,' it says, 'no man can deny; and is indeed a 'perfect *Opera*: there being this difference only between an *Opera* and a Tragedy; 'that the one is a Story sung with a proper Action, the other spoken. And he must 'be a very ignorant Player who knows not there is a Musical Cadence in speaking; 'and that a man may as well speak out of Tune, as sing out of Tune.'

The Opera opens with what is the Second Scene of the Comedy's First Act, where the Clowns have assembled to arrange for the Play; Shakespeare's text is closely followed; there are omissions, it is true, but there is no attempt at 'improvement,' and only in two instances is there what might be termed an emendation: first, where Bottom says 'To the rest,' this phrase is interpreted as a stage-direction and enclosed in brackets; and secondly, where Bottom says 'a lover is more condoling,' the Opera has 'a lover's is,' &c., in both instances anticipating modern conjectures. At the close of this scene, in which is interwoven the subsequent arrangements for the Clowns' Interlude at the beginning of Act III, Titania enters 'leading the Indian 'boy,' for whose entertainment she commands her 'Fairy Coire' to describe, in song, 'that Happiness, that peace of mind, Which lovers only in retirement find,' and they proceed to do it in the following lively style:—

'Come, come, come, let us leave the Town,
And in some lonely place,
Where Crouds and Noise were never known,
Resolve to end our days.

'In pleasant Shades upon the Grass
At Night our selves we'll lay;
Our Days in harmless Sport shall pass,
Thus Time shall slide away.'

Enter Fairies *leading in three Drunken Poets, one of them Blinded.*

Blind Poet. Fill up the Bowl, then, *&c.*
Fairy. Trip it, trip it in a Ring;
Around this Mortal Dance, and Sing.
Poet. Enough, enough,
We must play at Blind Man's Buff.
Turn me round, and stand away,
I'll catch whom I may.
2 Fairy. About him go, so, so, so,
Pinch the Wretch from Top to Toe;

Pinch him forty, forty times,
Pinch till he confess his Crimes.
Poet. Hold, you damn'd tormenting Punk,
I confess—
Both Fairies. What, what, &c.
Poet. I'm Drunk, as I live Boys, Drunk.
Both Fairies. What art thou, speak?
Poet. If you will know it,
I am a scurvy Poet.
Fairies. Pinch him, pinch him, for his Crimes,
His Nonsense, and his Dogrel Rhymes.
Poet. Oh! oh! oh!
1 Fairy. Confess more, more.
Poet. I confess I'm very poor.
Nay, prithee do not pinch me so,
Good dear Devil let me go;
And as I hope to wear the Bays,
I'll write a Sonnet in thy Praise.
Chorus. Drive 'em hence, away, away,
Let 'em sleep till break of Day.

A Fairy announces to Titania that Oberon is in sharp pursuit of the little Indian boy, whereupon Titania bids the earth open, the little boy disappears, and the act closes.

The Second Act of the Opera follows the original Second Act, in the entrances of the characters, and their speeches are mainly the same, throughout the quarrel of Oberon and Titania; the similarity continues through the description of the little Western flower, except that the compliment to Queen Elizabeth is diverted by Oberon's saying that he 'saw young Cupid in the mid-way hanging, At a fair vestal 'virgin taking aim.' At Titania's command the second Scene *changes to a Prospect of Grotto's, Arbors, and delightful Walks: The Arbors are Adorn'd with all variety of Flowers, the Grotto's supported by Terms, these lead to two Arbors on either side of the scene*, &c. &c. Then through two pages we have, pretty much like a child's fingers playing on two notes alternately on the piano, such stanzas as these:—

Come all ye Songsters of the sky,
Wake, and Assemble in this Wood;
But no ill-boding Bird be nigh,
None but the Harmless and the Good.
May the God of Wit inspire,
The Sacred Nine to bear a part;
And the Blessed Heavenly Quire,
Shew the utmost of their Art.
While Eccho shall in sounds remote,
Repeat each Note,
Each Note, each Note.
Chorus. May the God, &c.

In the Third Act we have *Pyramus and Thisbe* as it is played before the Duke; at its close Robin Goodfellow drives off the clowns and puts the Ass-head on Bottom. Then ensues the scene between Titania and Bottom, for whose delectation a Fairy

Mask is brought on, and the Scene changes to '*a great Wood; a long row of large* '*Trees on each side; a River in the middle; Two rows of lesser Trees of a different* '*kind just on the side of the River, which meet in the middle, and make so many* '*Arches; Two great Dragons make a Bridge over the River; their Bodies form two* '*Arches, through which two Swans are seen in the River at a distance.*' A troop of Fawn, Dryades and Naiades sing as follows:—

'If Love's a Sweet Passion, why does it torment?
If a Bitter, oh tell me whence comes my content?
Since I suffer with pleasure, why should I complain,
Or grieve at my Fate, when I know 'tis in vain?
Yet so pleasing the Pain is, so soft is the Dart,
That at once it both wounds me, and tickles my Heart.
I press her hand gently, look Languishing down,
And by Passionate Silence I make my Love known,
But oh! how I'm blest, when so kind she does prove,
By some willing mistake to discover her Love.
When in striving to hide, she reveals all her Flame,
And our Eyes tell each other, what neither dares Name.'

While a Symphony's Playing, the two Swans come swimming in through the Arches to the Bank of the River, as if they would Land; there turn themselves into Fairies and Dance; at the same time the Bridge vanishes, and the Trees that were arch'd, raise themselves upright.

Four Savages Enter, fright the Fairies *away, and dance an Entry.*

Enter Coridon *and* Mopsa.

Co. Now the Maids and the Men are making of Hay,
We have left the dull Fools, and are stol'n away.
Then Mopsa no more
Be Coy as before,
But let us merrily, merrily Play,
And kiss, and kiss, the sweet time away.

Mo. Why how now, Sir *Clown*, how came you so bold?
I'd have you to know I'm not made of that mold.
I tell you again,
Maids must kiss no Men.
No, no; no, no; no kissing at all;
I'le not kiss, till I kiss you for good and all.

Co. No, no.

Mo. No, no,

Co. Not kiss you at all.

Mo. Not kiss, till you kiss me for good and all.

Not kiss, *&c.*

And so this struggle continues, to be relished by an audience who witnessed a conflict to which in daily life they were probably not accustomed.

The rest of Shakespeare's play is incorporated; the mistakes of Puck with the love-juice, and the mischances that befall the lovers in consequence, their slumber on the ground and their awakening by the horns of the hunters, all follow in due course. Although we have no record whatsoever that the Opera was intended to celebrate any nuptials, yet its appropriateness to such a celebration is as marked as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, if not even more emphatically marked—a fact which I

humbly commend to the consideration of those who contend for this interpretation of Shakespeare's play.

The Play of *Pyramus and Thisbe* having been already given in the Second Act, its place in the Fifth Act is supplied by an elaborate Mask, during which a 'Chinese 'enters and sings,' and to him responds a 'Chinese-woman,' and both join in a chorus to the effect that 'We never cloy, But renew our Joy, And one Bliss another 'invites.' Then 'Six Monkeys come from between the trees and dance,' which apparently imparts so much exhilaration to 'Two Women' that they burst into song and demand the presence of Hymen:—

'Sure, the dull god of marriage does not hear;
'We'll rouse him with a charm. Hymen, appear!
'*Chorus.* Appear! Hymen, appear!'

Hymen obeys, but complains that

'My torch has long been out, I hate
'On loose dissembled Vows to wait.
'Where hardly Love out-lives the Wedding-Night,
'False Flames, Love's Meteors, yield my Torch no light.'

There is a grand dance of twenty-four persons, then Hymen and the Two Women sing together:—

'They shall be as happy as they're fair;
'Love shall fill all the Places of Care:
'And every time the Sun shall display
'His rising Light,
'It shall be to them a new Wedding-Day;
'And when he sets, a new Nuptial-Night.'

This starts the Chinese man and woman dancing, which in turn starts 'The Grand 'Chorus,' in which all the dancers join, and the Mask ends.

Oberon then resumes:—

'At dead of Night we'll to the Bride-bed come,
'And sprinkle hallow'd Dew-drops round the Room.
'*Titania.* We'll drive the Fume about, about,
'To keep all noxious Spirits out,
'That the issue they create
'May be ever fortunate,' &c.

The Fairy King and Queen then bring the Opera to a close, pretty much in the style of all plays in those days, by alternately threatening and cajoling the audience until the last words are:—

'*Ob.* Those Beau's, who were at Nurse, chang'd by my elves.
'*Tit.* Shall dream of nothing, but their pretty selves.
'*Ob.* We'll try a Thousand charming Ways to win ye.
'*Tit.* If all this will not do, the Devil's in ye.'

DOWNES, in his *Roscius Anglicanus* (p. 57), says that this Opera in ornaments 'was superior to' *King Arthur* by Dryden or *The Prophetess* by Beaumont and Fletcher, 'especially in cloaths for all the Singers and Dancers; Scenes, Machines, 'and Decorations; all most profusely set off, and excellently performed.' 'The 'Court and Town,' he concludes, 'were wonderfully satisfy'd with it; but the 'expences in setting it out being so great, the Company got very little by it.'

PLAN OF THE WORK, &c.

IN this Edition the attempt is made to give, in the shape of TEXTUAL NOTES, on the same page with the Text, all the Various Readings of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from the First Quarto to the latest critical Edition of the play; then, as COMMENTARY, follow the Notes which the Editor has thought worthy of insertion, not only for the purpose of elucidating the text, but at times as illustrations of the history of Shakespearian criticism. In the APPENDIX will be found discussions of subjects, which on the score of length could not be conveniently included in the Commentary.

EDITIONS COLLATED IN THE TEXTUAL NOTES.

FISHER'S QUARTO (Ashbee's Facsimile)	[Q_1]	1600
ROBERTS'S QUARTO (Ashbee's Facsimile)	[Q_2]	1600
THE SECOND FOLIO	[F_2]	1632
THE THIRD FOLIO	[F_3]	1664
THE FOURTH FOLIO	[F_4]	1685
ROWE (First Edition)	[Rowe i]	1709
ROWE (Second Edition)	[Rowe ii]	1714
POPE (First Edition)	[Pope i]	1723
POPE (Second Edition)	[Pope ii]	1728
THEOBALD (First Edition)	[Theob. i]	1733
THEOBALD (Second Edition)	[Theob. ii]	1740
HANMER	[Han.]	1744
WARBURTON	[Warb.]	1747
JOHNSON	[Johns.]	1765
CAPELL	[Cap.]	(?) 1765
JOHNSON and STEEVENS	[Var. '73]	1773
JOHNSON and STEEVENS	[Var. '78]	1778
JOHNSON and STEEVENS	[Var. '85]	1785
RANN	[Rann]	1787
MALONE	[Mal.]	1790
STEEVENS	[Steev.]	1793
REED'S STEEVENS	[Var. '03]	1803
REED'S STEEVENS	[Var. '13]	1813
BOSWELL'S MALONE	[Var.]	1821
KNIGHT	[Knt.]	(?) 1840
COLLIER (First Edition)	[Coll. i]	1842
HALLIWELL (Folio Edition)	[Hal.]	1856
SINGER (Second Edition)	[Sing. ii]	1856
DYCE (First Edition)	[Dyce i]	1857
STAUNTON	[Sta.]	1857
COLLIER (Second Edition)	[Coll. ii]	1858
RICHARD GRANT WHITE (First Edition)	[Wh. i]	1858

CLARK and WRIGHT (*The Cambridge Edition*)	[Cam.]	1863
CLARK and WRIGHT (*The Globe Edition*) ..	[Glo.]	1864
KEIGHTLEY	[Ktly]	1864
CHARLES and MARY COWDEN-CLARKE ..	[Cla.]	(?) 1864
DYCE (Second Edition)	[Dyce ii]	1866
DYCE (Third Edition)	[Dyce iii]	1875
COLLIER (Third Edition)	[Coll. iii]	1877
WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT (*Clarendon Press Series*)	[Wrt]	1877
HUDSON	[Huds.]	1880
RICHARD GRANT WHITE (Second Edition) ..	[Wh. ii]	1883
CAMBRIDGE (Second Edition, W. A. WRIGHT)	[Cam. ii]	1891

W. HARNESS	1830
W. J. ROLFE	1877
W. WAGNER	1881
F. A. MARSHALL (*Henry Irving Edition*)	1888
K. DEIGHTON	1893
A. W. VERITY (*Pitt Press Edition*)	1894

The last six editions I have not collated beyond referring to them in disputed passages. The text of Shakespeare has become, within the last twenty-five years, so settled that to collate, word for word, editions which have appeared within these years, is a work of supererogation. The case is different where an editor revises his text and notes in a second or a third edition; it is then interesting to mark the effect of maturer judgement.

The TEXT is that of the FIRST FOLIO of 1623. Every word, I might say almost every letter, has been collated with the original.

In the TEXTUAL NOTES the symbol Ff indicates the agreement of the *Second*, *Third*, and *Fourth Folios*.

The omission of the apostrophe in the *Second Folio*, a peculiarity of that edition, is not generally noted.

I have not called attention to every little misprint in the Folio. The Textual Notes will show, if need be, that they are misprints by the agreement of all the Editors in their correction.

Nor is notice taken of the first Editor who adopted the modern spelling, or who substituted commas for parentheses, or changed ? to !.

The sign + indicates the agreement of ROWE, POPE, THEOBALD, HANMER, WARBURTON, and JOHNSON.

When WARBURTON precedes HANMER in the Textual Notes, it indicates that HANMER has followed a suggestion of WARBURTON'S.

The words *et cet.* after any reading indicate that it is the reading of *all other* editions.

The words *et seq.* indicate the agreement of all subsequent editions.

The abbreviation (*subs.*) indicates that the reading is *substantially* given, and that immaterial variations in spelling, punctuation, or stage-directions are disregarded.

An Emendation or Conjecture which is given in the Commentary is not repeated

in the Textual Notes unless it has been adopted by an editor in his Text; nor is *conj.* added in the Textual Notes to the name of the proposer of the conjecture unless the conjecture happens to be that of an editor, in which case its omission would lead to the inference that such was the reading of his text.

COLL. (MS) refers to COLLIER'S annotated Second Folio.

QUINCY (MS) refers to an annotated Fourth Folio in the possession of MR J. P. QUINCY.

In citations from plays, other than *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Acts, Scenes, and Lines of *The Globe Edition* are followed.

LIST OF BOOKS FROM WHICH CITATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.

To economise space in the Commentary I have frequently cited, with the name of an author, an abbreviated title of his work, and sometimes not even as much as that. In the following LIST, arranged alphabetically, enough of the full title is given to serve as a reference.

Be it understood that this List gives only those books wherefrom Notes have been taken at first hand; it does not include books which have been consulted or have been used in verifying quotations made by the contributors to the earlier *Variorums*, or by other critics. Were these included the List would be many times as long. Nor does it include the large number in German which I have examined, but from which, to my regret, lack of space has obliged me to forego making any extract.

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